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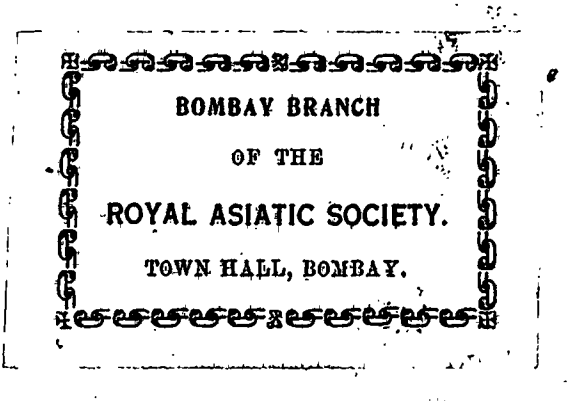


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# LIVES OF LORD CASTLEREAGH

AND

# SIR CHARLES STEWART

THE

## SECOND AND THIRD MARQUESSES OF LONDONDERRY

*WITH ANNALS OF CONTEMPORARY EVENTS IN WHICH THEY BORE A PART*

FROM THE ORIGINAL PAPERS OF THE FAMILY

BY

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# LIVES OF LORD CASTLEREAGH

AND

# SIR CHARLES STEWART.

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## CHAPTER X.

### CAMPAIGN OF DRESDEN, CULM, AND DENNEWITZ.
### AUGUST—OCTOBER 1813.



1. Plan of the Allied sovereigns for the campaign.

When the Grand Army of the Russians and Prussians crossed the Bohemian frontier and assembled under the walls of Prague, the object was to form, by a junction with the Austrian forces in that province, an imposing army, which was estimated vaguely at 200,000 combatants, destined to descend from the salient bastion which Bohemia formed in the centre of Germany, threaten the communications of the French Emperor with the Rhine, and, by turning, render nugatory all the vast preparations he had made for maintaining himself on the Elbe. The design formed at Trachenberg, and subsequently matured by the aid of the celebrated French general, Moreau, who had come from America to join the Allied armies, was ably conceived, and promised the greatest results if vigorously carried into execution. But it required for its full development a larger efficient force than the Allied sovereigns had at their disposal, and a degree of unity in

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council and precision in movements which was hardly to be expected in a huge array, composed of the armies of the three great military powers, not accustomed to act together, and mutually jealous of each other's directions. Seventy-five thousand Russians and twenty-five thousand Prussians had crossed the Moldau on the 17th, 18th, and 19th August, in the highest spirits and finest condition; and the Austrians had held out assurances that these would be joined by 120,000 troops of their nation. But though their total array in arms in Bohemia was little short of that amount, yet the proportion of it capable of undertaking the duties of a campaign, and standing in line with the veterans of Russia and Prussia, did not exceed 80,000; and from the Russian and Prussian contingent, 5000 were to be deducted, from the effects of fatigue and sickness, before the campaign commenced. Thus, at the very utmost, not more than 170,000 men could be relied on for active operations beyond the mountain frontier in the Saxon plain—a great force undoubtedly, but hardly adequate to the arduous undertaking of expelling from its fortified position the enormous multitude which Napoleon had there collected.[1]

[1] Cathcart, 204-208; Thiers, xvi. 242, 247-249; Lond. 109, 110.

2. Forces at Napoleon's disposal.

For the army, which the unwearied energy and admirable organisation of the French Emperor had now assembled under his immediate command at Dresden, was immense, and such as went far to justify the confidence in his good fortune which had led him to reject the Austrian proposals and hazard all on the doubtful issue of war. We have the authority of M. Thiers, founded on the Imperial muster-rolls in the archives of Paris, that, independent of the army of 100,000 men, or thereby, which was opposed to Marshal Blucher in Silesia, Napoleon had no less than 172,000 men under his immediate orders, in and around Dresden, stretching from the Bohemian Mountains on the right to Torgau on the left. In addition to this, he had placed 110,000 men under the orders of Oudinot, Girard, and Davoust,

to threaten Berlin; there were 20,000 in Bavaria, 60,000 in Italy, and 90,000 veterans in garrison on the Oder, the Elbe, and in Dantzic.* In all, he had 550,000 men in arms, of whom, after making every deduction for garrisons, non-effective, and sick, at least 170,000 could be relied on as available, under the Emperor in person, in the centre, and 90,000 under each of his lieutenants opposed to the armies of Blucher and the Crown Prince of Sweden on the flank. The forces of the Coalition were, numerically, at least equal to this immense force, and, indeed, are estimated by M. Thiers at 800,000 men in Italy and Germany, or advancing through Poland from Russia.[1] This statement of the Allied force, however, is not drawn by the French historian from any official sources, and is very much exaggerated. It is reduced by the more moderate estimate of Sir George Cathcart, who had access to good sources of information, on the Allied side, to 301,000 between the Rhine and the Oder, while the French active force in the same limits is given at 391,000, as already stated.[2] Wilson, however, shows that this under-estimates the Austrians by about 40,000. Probably we shall not be far wrong if we take the force of each party at the amount stated by the best informed on their own side, as in that way accuracy is most likely to be obtained, and exaggeration is least to be apprehended. Judging by this standard, the fair inference seems to be that, for active operations between the Oder and the Rhine, the French had, in the outset of the campaign, 390,000 men, and the Allies 340,000; but that these numbers would be nearly reversed, and the balance turned the other way, if the contest were considerably prolonged, and the Allies had time to bring

[1] Thiers, xvi. 259.

[2] Cathcart, 192, 193.

* Their exact disposition was as follows:—In Silesia, under Macdonald, opposed to Blucher, 100,000; along the Bohemian frontier, watching the passes, 100,000; reserve under Napoleon near Bautzen, 72,000; under Oudinot, menacing Berlin, 68,000; under Girard, in front of Magdeburg, 12,000; under Davoust at Hamburg, 25,000 French and 10,000 Danes—Total, 387,000.—THIERS, xvi. 258.

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all their distant reserves into action. This numerical superiority, already considerable, was seriously enhanced in the outset of hostilities by the concentrated position of the French forces, their command of all the fortresses on the Elbe and the entire passages over that river, and the comparative dispersion of the Allied armies, and severance of the Grand Army under Schwartzenberg, in Bohemia, from the two others on the right bank of the Elbe.[1]

[1] Cathcart, 209, 210; Thiers, xvi. 257-259; Lond. 111, 112.

3. Napoleon first moves against Blucher at Berlin.

Determined, according to his usual custom, to take the initiative in hostilities, Napoleon, before the expiry of the armistice, had given orders for the concentration of seven corps—viz., the 1st, 2d, 3d, 5th, 6th, 8th, and 11th —with the Guards and three corps of reserve cavalry, to oppose the Allies in Silesia, where their Grand Army was then placed. As this force amounted to 160,000 infantry, and 30,000 cavalry, with 600 guns, it was much larger than any which the Allies, even with the whole aid of the Austrians, could have brought against him. He had no doubt, therefore, of gaining in the very outset of the campaign a decisive victory over them. But not content with this great object, he directed at the *same time* an advance against Berlin by the 4th, 7th, and 12th corps, and a corps of cavalry, mustering 70,000 combatants, who were to be supported by Marshal Davoust from Hamburg, bringing up the attacking force to 100,000 men. As the army which the Crown Prince could collect to oppose this invasion did not at first exceed 70,000, he entertained sanguine hopes that the Prussian capital would speedily fall into his hands; an event which would at once gratify his animosity against Bernadotte, satiate his vengeance against Prussia, and strike a blow which would resound throughout Europe.[2] But in resolving in this manner on offensive operations, at the same time, both in Silesia and Prussia, he committed the same error, which had proved so detrimental to his fortunes in the Peninsula, when he invaded Por-

[2] Lond. 109, 110; Cathcart, 210, 211; Thiers, xvi. 257, 259.

tugal simultaneously with Andalusia, and fatal in Russia, when he advanced to Moscow, leaving the war in Spain still unconcluded.

4. Mutual advances of Napoleon and Blucher against each other in Silesia. Aug. 19.

The cross-march of the Russians and Prussians into Bohemia, of which the French Emperor immediately received intelligence, made no alterations on these plans. On the contrary, it only prompted him the more to carry them out, because it left Blucher in Silesia now altogether detached from the Grand Army, and with a comparatively small force alone exposed to his blows. Blucher's orders, intended to favour and prove a diversion to the operations of the Grand Army, were to advance in force against the enemy, and disquiet him at all points—avoiding, however, a general engagement—and immediately falling back when the presence of the Guards and cuirassiers showed that the Emperor was in command in person. Previous to advancing, Napoleon, on the morning of the 19th August, moved in person through the mountains beyond Gabel to the summit of the defile, from whence he had an extensive view over the Bohemian plains. He then assembled all the curés and most intelligent persons of the district, and, after his usual fashion, overwhelmed them with questions as to the directions of the march of the Allied forces, the amount of their troops, and the whole particulars of their advance. Having satisfied himself, from the answers to these questions, that they were moving on Prague, and that several days must elapse before they could recross the mountains to the northward and threaten his communications with the Rhine, he halted and turned back into Silesia. He thought, and with reason, that he had time to strike a decisive blow against Blucher, now abandoned to his own resources, before the Allied Grand Army could possibly descend from the Boehmerwald into the Saxon plains.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 262, 263; Odel. i. 239-241; Fain, ii. 239, 240

Meanwhile, Blucher, in conformity with his orders, was vigorously pressing the French corps opposed to him in Silesia. Ney at this time had the command of the forces

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left in that quarter; and he had under him, besides his own corps, those of Lauriston, Macdonald, and Marmont, a force estimated by Napoleon at 100,000 men. Notwithstanding the magnitude of this force, which was considerably greater than that of Blucher to which it was opposed, such was the vivacity of the Prussian general's attack that the French gave way before him at all points. Ney fell back on the night of the 17th from Liegnitz; next day the Katzbach was passed at all points; and Blucher continued to press upon the French with such vigour that by the 20th Ney had been compelled to evacuate Buntzlau, and fall back at all points behind the Bober.[1]

5. Retreat of Ney in Silesia before Blucher. Aug. 17. Aug. 18. [1] Boutourlin, 10, 11; Fain, ii. 214; Thiers, xvi. 266, 267; Odel. i. 241.

This vigorous irruption of Blucher had the effect of at once withdrawing the attention of the Emperor from the operations of the Allies in Bohemia. He no sooner received advices of the forward movement of the Prussian general, than he stopped his advance upon Gabel into Bohemia, and, turning to the east with his Guards and reserves, was soon upon the Bober, which he passed on a bridge of pontoons. This formidable reinforcement, and still more the *prestige* and energy of the chief who led it, changed the state of affairs. The Allies were now in presence of Napoleon at the head of 160,000 men; and although, including the reserves in the rear, Blucher had nearly 100,000 men under his command, this was by no means adequate to resisting the assault of such a mass led by such a chief. Blucher's orders, too, were, on the first appearance of the Guards and cuirassiers in the enemy's ranks, to suspend his advance and fall back. No sooner was he apprised, by the increased vigour of the enemy's resistance, and the appearance of the well-known plumes and helmets of the Guards, that he was in presence of the Emperor in person, than he gave orders to retire at all points towards Jauer. The retrograde movement, however, was not effected without serious loss. Encouraged by the powerful reinforcement they had received, and the presence of their chief, the French generals and

6. Napoleon crosses over and repulses him. Aug. 21.

soldiers resumed the offensive with the utmost vigour. Lauriston and Macdonald, followed by the Emperor in person, with the Guards and cuirassiers, debouched from Lowenberg on the right, while Ney and Marmont crossed at Buntzlau on the left. Maison, with the leading division of Lauriston's corps, threw back D'York, notwithstanding a vigorous resistance, and pressed vehemently on Blucher. The Prussian general, in consequence, fell back behind the Haynau, a little stream between the Bober and the Katzbach; but he sustained a loss of 3000 men in his retreat. The pursuit was continued through the whole of the following day with increased vigour; and the Allies, after having opposed a stout resistance, were driven over the Katzbach, with the loss, in all, since hostilities were renewed, of 6000 men, while the French were not weakened by more than two-thirds of the number.[1]

Aug. 22.

[1] Thiers, xvi. 266, 267; Odel. i. 241; Bout. 10, 11; Fain, ii. 244-247; Lond. 110.

7. Operations of the Allies in Bohemia, and against Dresden.

While these operations were going forward on the right bank of the Elbe in Silesia, movements of a still more important and decisive character were commencing on the part of the Grand Allied Army in Bohemia. Following up the plan of operations concerted at Trachenberg, this army received orders to cross the Erzgebirge range, and descend in several columns on the main road to Dresden, directly in the rear of the French position. This movement began on the 21st, the very day when Napoleon, on the other bank of the Elbe, was commencing his vigorous onset on Blucher, and the prescribed order of march was as follows: Beginning on the right, the corps of Wittgenstein and Kleist were to pass the defile of Nollendorf and Peterswalde, and follow the high-road from Töplitz to Dresden. This road ran near the intrenched camp at Pirna, so famous in the wars of the Great Frederick, and close to the fort of Koenigstein, both of which required to be observed. The second column, with which were the Russian headquarters under Barclay de Tolly, was to march by the defile of Altenberg and Barenstein. A third, composed entirely of Austrians, with whom were

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the imperial and royal headquarters, was to move on Kommotau, and enter Saxony by the road to Leipsic; and as soon as this column reached Marienberg, it was ordered to turn to the right and march by Töplitz and Saida on Dresden. A fourth column, composed of Austrian new levies under Klenau, was to march by Annaberg, and continue its route by Freyburg on Dresden. These columns were all in full march on the 22d, and it was not long before the advanced-guard fell in with the posts of St Cyr, who was stationed in the camp of Pirna and in front of Dresden with his corps, 22,000 strong.[1]

[1] General orders, Aug. 12, 1813; Lond. 110; Cathcart, 213, 214; Thiers, xvi. 268-270.

8. Their advance to Dresden. Aug. 25.

Notwithstanding his great abilities, Marshal St Cyr was no match for the overwhelming force thus directed against him. He had clearly foreseen it, and urged Napoleon to make provision accordingly; but the Emperor for once was at fault, and had thrown all his disposable forces to the right bank of the river to restrain the incursion of Blucher. On the evening of the 22d, Wittgenstein's advanced-guard encountered the French outposts, attacked the lines of Pirna with the bayonet, and carried them, though defended by the whole division of General Bonnet. A part of the French retired upon Dresden; the remainder crossed the Elbe on bridges of boats, and got off. After this success, no further resistance was attempted. Koenigstein was blockaded; and the different corps, pursuing the routes assigned to them, were, on the afternoon of the 25th, with the exception of Klenau's corps, which was a day's march in the rear, all grouped in the valleys which lay behind the amphitheatre of swelling hills, rising one behind another, which form the beautiful boundary on the south and west of the plain of Dresden. Wittgenstein's advanced-guard, closely following the enemy, had already reached the suburbs of Dresden, and the vicinity of the splendid ornamental enclosure called the Grosse Garten, lying close to the walls of the southern side.[2] A chain of pickets was established in a wide

[2] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Aug. 28, 1813, MS.; Cathcart, 214, 215; St Cyr, iv. 78-80; Fain, ii. 252, 253.

circle, all round the southern and western side of the Saxon capital; and the Allied sovereigns, riding to the front corps, reached, and long rested on, a projecting eminence, the end of one of the spurs of the Bohemian Mountains, from whence, in the serenity of a beautiful evening in autumn, they had a perfect view of Dresden, its smiling environs, and the windings of the Elbe, destined so soon to be the theatre of a sanguinary and memorable conflict.

9. Changes in the Allied plan of attack. Aug. 24.

The original intention of the Allied generals was to have moved upon the French communications with Leipsic and the Rhine, and thus draw Napoleon from his strongholds on the Elbe into the Saxon plains, where their superior cavalry might operate to the greatest advantage. This design, which was perfectly suited to the state of affairs when the bulk of Napoleon's forces was in and around Dresden, became, however, less advisable when he had thrown the greater part of them across the Elbe to combat Blucher, and after the intelligence received on the 23d of the easy capture of the camp of Pirna. At the same time, the comparatively small force left under St Cyr for the protection of Dresden, suggested the project of a sudden advance upon that city, which it was hoped might be carried by a *coup-de-main* before Napoleon, now far advanced towards Liegnitz in pursuit of Blucher, could return for its relief. Orders accordingly were given to all the columns to converge upon Dresden; but the Austrian corps, which were far advanced on the road to Freyburg, in the same plain, could not be brought into action for two days. This change of plan, in the middle of an operation in which hours required to be counted, as Napoleon with his Guards and reserves was known to be hastening back to the threatened point, proved extremely prejudicial, and was the real cause of the failure of the well-conceived movement in which it occurred.[1]

[1] Lond. iii; Cath. 215, 216; Bout. 28; St Cyr, iv. 96-99; Fain, ii. 253.

But while indecision as to an attack on the Saxon

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10. Extreme anxiety and terror in Dresden. Aug. 25.

capital thus pervaded the Allied councils, the utmost alarm existed in Dresden lest the town should be taken before the anxiously-expected succour could arrive for its relief. St Cyr almost hourly despatched messengers to the Emperor, with accounts constantly more pressing of the advance of the Allies; their vast numbers, and formidable artillery, and the imminent danger of its being immediately carried by assault. In truth, the Allies had now performed successfully the greatest feat in strategy; they had thrown themselves in almost irresistible strength on the enemy's communications without compromising their own. They stood, on the evening of the 25th, in great numbers on the direct line to Leipsic and the Rhine; their light troops inundated the whole of Saxony in the rear of the French army; and their main body, 120,000 strong, with 500 guns, formed a vast semicircle, surrounding within cannon-shot the whole of the old town of Dresden on the left bank of the Elbe. The troops, it is true, were extremely fatigued with the forced marches they had made almost incessantly during the last ten days, and Klenau's entire corps, 25,000 strong, were still a day's march in the rear; but, on the other hand, the troops in the town were only 30,000, and the defences consisted almost entirely of a few earth redoubts, wooden palisades, and enclosure-walls, which could not be expected to resist for many hours a concentric fire of the heavy artillery which was arranged on the heights around the city.[1]

[1] Cath. 217; Lond. 112, 113; St Cyr, iv. 96-99; Jomini, iv. 382-384.

11. Debate as to an immediate attack on the town. Aug. 25.

In these circumstances, it was anxiously debated at the Allied headquarters, whether an immediate attack should be hazarded on the town, or it should be delayed till Klenau had come up, and the whole Allied force was assembled. On the one hand, it was strongly urged by the Emperor Alexander and General Jomini that an attack should be made at latest at daybreak on the following morning; that notwithstanding his boasted activity, they had now anticipated Napoleon at the decisive point;

that the newly-constructed defences of Dresden, consisting chiefly of wooden palisades, could not long resist the attack of a hundred thousand men and three hundred guns, which could be concentrated for the assault; that though undoubtedly the place could not be carried without a heavy loss, yet that was as nothing compared to the advantage of winning, in the outset of the campaign, the centre of the enemy's defensive line, with its garrison and immense military stores; that the Allies, thus masters of the principal passage over the Elbe, would at once gain the immense advantage of being able to operate at pleasure on either bank, which Napoleon had made such efforts to secure to himself; but that these advantages could not be gained if this attack were delayed more than twelve hours, as next day the French Emperor would arrive with his Guards and reserves, and turn the scale in his own favour. The King of Prussia was of the same opinion. Lord Cathcart strongly supported it. He had ridden alone behind the Grosse Garten, between Plauen and Raecknitz, to the close vicinity of the enemy's outposts, and reported that the way was clear and everything ready for the assault. On the other hand, Schwartzenberg and the whole Austrian generals strongly insisted on the fatigue of the troops, the absence of Klenau's corps, and the inexpedience of putting in hazard the great advantage already gained, of having got possession of the enemy's communications, by an unnecessary and perilous attack, which, if unsuccessful, might induce the most serious disasters. This opinion, after an animated discussion, prevailed; it was resolved not to hazard an assault.[1]*

[1] Jom. iv. 382, 383; St Cyr, iv. 96-99; Cath. 216, 217; Lond. 111; Thiers, xvi. 297-299.

"On this occasion," says Sir George Cathcart, "while the important conference of sovereigns and chiefs was going on at a little distance from us, General Moreau,

* The author received the account of this important conference from Lord Cathcart himself, and he was entirely corroborated by Sir Charles Stewart, who gave the same account of it, and was also present.

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12. Remarkable conversation between Cathcart and Moreau. Aug. 25.

who was either not invited to join, or studiously kept aloof from it, was conversing familiarly in English, which he spoke perfectly, and smoking his cigar, with the author and some others of the suite. We asked him whether the town was to be attacked? He told us he was glad to say the town was not to be attacked, and that the intention had been given up, 'for,' said he, 'its fortifications are in good repair, and within the town, as well as in the faubourg, houses have been loopholed. There is a garrison of 35,000 men; but, notwithstanding this, if attacked with determination by the superior forces at our disposal, it might be taken with a loss of 5000, perhaps even 15,000 men. We are already on Napoleon's communications. The possession of the town is no object—it will fall of itself at a future time."[1]

[1] Cath. 216.

13. Accident which brought on an assault.

But although the idea of an assault was thus abandoned at the headquarters of the sovereigns, yet it took place nevertheless, owing to a very singular circumstance, arising from the variety of separate authorities which obtained in the Allied army. Great jealousy, as already observed, existed there as to the party which was to be intrusted with the supreme command; and the Russians, in particular, were so distrustful of the Austrian generalissimo that it had been found necessary to conceal his command from them by having all the orders to the troops of that nation conveyed through Barclay de Tolly. Schwartzenberg had the evening before sent instructions through his chief of the staff, RADETSKY, destined for celebrity in future days, for a demonstration against Dresden on the following day, which might or might not be converted into a serious attack, according as it might seem or not, when it was commenced, to promise success. When the plan of an attack on Dresden was abandoned at the conference held late on the evening before—a resolution confirmed in another council held early the next day—he promised to countermand the orders. Whether it was the difficulty of doing so, or that counter orders did not, through the im-

perial Austrian and Russian staffs, arrive in time to cancel the previous directions, certain it is that an attack took place on the Grosse Garten, on the morning of the 26th, by the corps of Kleist, which, after a sharp conflict, led to the occupation of the greater part of that important enclosure by the Allied troops. Upon this the French, in obedience evidently to orders from their chief, abandoned their whole positions outside the works, and retired at all points into the intrenched camp in front of the line of the old ramparts, now almost entirely demolished, where they prepared to make a desperate resistance. This camp consisted of four large redoubts, strengthened by palisades, and armed with heavy artillery, capable of long retarding, if not withstanding, the most formidable attacks.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 286-297, 298; Cath. 217, 218; Lond. 111, 112.

14. An attack on Dresden is again resolved on.

This success, and the intelligence received of the arrival of Napoleon in person in Dresden, to be speedily followed by that of the Guards and reserves, induced the Austrian commander-in-chief again to alter his plans, and hazard, what he called in his bulletin giving an account of the battle which ensued, "a strong reconnoissance" against Dresden, but which, in truth, was either intended to be, or ere long became, a general attack on that city.* At three in the afternoon of the 26th, the Allied army was in motion at all points, and in five massy columns, each preceded by fifty pieces of artillery, advanced against the French redoubts around the town. Wittgenstein commanded the right, having on his left Kleist's Prussians, who had just won the Grosse Garten, and he was to attack the barrier of Pirna, in front of which strong batteries had been erected, which rendered the advance a matter of extreme difficulty. Kleist advanced through the Grosse Garten, and was to attack the barriers beyond it.[2] In the centre, the Austrians under Colloredo directed their masses against the Garten Moczinski, and the gate

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[2] Thiers, xvi. 298; Cath. 217, 218; St Cyr, iv. 99, 100; Fain, ii. 268; Lond. 113.

* "The Prince Marshals order," says Wilson, "was limited to the assault of the exterior redoubts. The generals commanding at the different points were to judge of the practicability of further operations."—WILSON, ii. 248.

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of Dohna and Freyberg, which were near it, while, on the extreme left, other Austrians, forming the advanced-guard of Klenau's corps, which was now coming up, formed towards Plauen columns of attack on the heights, menacing, indeed, and from which a violent fire of artillery issued, but which were not apparently destined to take a very active part in the conflict which followed.

15. Napoleon's return towards Dresden. Aug. 23.

Meanwhile Napoleon, redoubling his energy with the danger which threatened him, was hastening back with all his disposable forces to the Saxon capital. It was at Lowenberg, in Silesia, on the evening of the 22d, that he first received intelligence of the approach of the enemy in great strength to Dresden, and he immediately halted his Guards and reserves, and, giving the command of the army destined to follow Blucher, consisting of Lauriston's, Macdonald's, and Ney's corps, with Sebastiani's cavalry, to Macdonald, he himself, taking Ney along with him, made every preparation, in the utmost haste, to return to Dresden. He took with him the entire Guard and reserve cavalry, with the corps of Marmont, which had been the least engaged; and at the same time he sent orders to Vandamme and Victor to fall back from the Bohemian frontier also to the same capital, leaving Poniatowski to guard the defile of Zittau, through which pursuit might be apprehended. By this concentration of force he reckoned on having in four days 80,000, in six, 180,000 men grouped around Dresden; and he thought there was no doubt that St Cyr could hold the intrenched camp there till these succours arrived. The same evening he despatched Murat to the Saxon capital to report the state of affairs, and encourage St Cyr, who was writing very despondingly as to his means of defence, and assure him of the speedy arrival of the Emperor, with the elite of the army, to his support. On the day following, he despatched General Gourgaud, afterwards his faithful companion at St Helena, on the same destination, to whom he verbally communicated the strongest words of encourage-

ment to be repeated to Murat and St Cyr. Meanwhile the Emperor himself marched, surrounded by his Guards, till noonday on the 24th, by which time he had reached Bautzen. Having there, however, received still more alarming advices from that general, he advanced alone to Stolpen, on the road leading alike to Pirna and Dresden, as yet undetermined whether to move on the former and strike at the enemy's rear, or the latter, to resist the front attack of the Grand Army. He nourished the most magnificent designs in his breast, designing to march with 120,000 men by Pirna and Koenigstein on the enemy's communications, while St Cyr, in his intrenched camp, kept him at bay in front. He was in the highest spirits, and repeatedly said to those around him, "Well, we shall gain a great battle; we shall soon march on Prague, on Berlin, on Vienna."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 267, 268; Fain, ii. 256, 257; Odel. i. 246-249; Bout. 30.

16. Napoleon's change of plan in consequence of the information from Dresden on the 25th.

But ere long the Emperor was wakened from these splendid dreams to the stern realities of his situation. On the night of the 25th, at eleven o'clock, Gourgaud returned, having accomplished his mission with extraordinary speed, and confirmed, in the minutest particulars, all that St Cyr had written. He reported that Dresden was environed on the whole left bank of the Elbe by an immense army, amply supplied with a formidable artillery, and that it could not hold out beyond another day without the personal appearance of the Emperor. The lines of investiture extended from Pirna to Plauen, forming a vast semicircle around the city on the western side, and the Allies were awaiting only the arrival of Klenau, who was expected on the night of the 25th or morning of the 26th, to make a grand attack, which, from their immense superiority of force, it would be impossible for its garrison unaided to resist. Already the accumulation of the enemy's best troops around the Grosse Garten had become such that preparations were making to evacuate it on the following morning. Strongly bent as the French Emperor was on his grand operation from the camp of Pirna with 120,000 men on the enemy's rear, he was staggered by this intel-

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ligence, which seemed to render an entire change of measures necessary. After deliberating an hour, he took his line. At midnight on the 25th, orders were issued to the whole Old Guard, which had already arrived at Stolpen, the cavalry of Latour Maubourg, and the half of the division Teste, which were all that had come up, to set out at daybreak, and march with the utmost expedition direct on Dresden. Vandamme alone, under whose orders he placed 40,000 men, was to continue the movement on the Allied rear by Koenigstein. He himself took a few hours' rest, and at six set out on horseback at the gallop for the same capital.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 288-290; Fain, ii. 257, 259; St Cyr, iv. 98, 99; Odel. i. 253, 254; Grosse Chron. i. 374-386.

17. Danger of the Emperor on approaching Dresden.

Before the Emperor, however, reached Dresden, he had ocular demonstration how pressing affairs had become, and how indispensable his personal presence with large reinforcements was. As he approached the city, the fire of the batteries, placed at the extremity of the French and Allied lines, became very violent, and the Emperor directed the alteration of one of St Cyr's on the right bank, to enable it to play with more effect on those of Wittgenstein on the left. Presently, as he drew nearer, the fire on either side became so violent, that the balls crossed over the Emperor's head, from the Russian guns on the one hand, and the redoubt Marcellini on the other, and he was obliged to pass the spot *ventre à terre*, as Odeleben, an eyewitness, says, to avoid the risk of being struck. Having in this way got over the dangerous ground, he galloped into Dresden surrounded by Latour Maubourg's cuirassiers, and suddenly appeared at the gate of the royal palace. His arrival excited no little surprise and the most unbounded enthusiasm among all classes. As he passed the Great Bridge, the wounded soldiers crept out of their beds in an hospital adjoining, and made the air resound with cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" and the joyful sound, repeated from mouth to mouth, soon spread over the whole city, and reanimated all in a defence, which many had begun to regard as hopeless.[2]

[2] Odel. i. 249-251; Thiers, xvi. 291, 292; Fain, ii. 263, 264.

Already the Russian balls were falling on the great bridge, which was soon crowded with cavalry and infantry crossing over, and in the Grand Place itself; but the terror which a few minutes before had possessed every breast soon gave place to joyous confidence, when it was known that the Emperor with his invincible Guards was among them.

18. Dispositions of Napoleon to defend Dresden.

The assault of the Allies, as already mentioned, did not commence till three in the afternoon, and the Emperor employed the precious hours which intervened between nine, when he had arrived, and that hour, in inspecting the works and making the additional dispositions which the successive arrival of reinforcements put in his power. The cuirassiers, under Latour Maubourg, who had come up with him, were quickly followed by the Old Guard; but the Young Guard, of four strong divisions, could not arrive till late in the evening, and the corps of Marmont and Victor, which followed next, could only follow in the course of the night. Meanwhile an attack was imminent, and required to be instantly guarded against; already the heights around the city were crowded with troops, and the strong batteries in their front, with the matches lighted, portended an immediate assault. In this extremity the Emperor placed a portion of the Old Guard in the rear of the other troops, at each of the barriers, with orders not to bring them forward till the last extremity, and he himself took post with the remainder in the Grand Place, ready to bear succour to any point which might require it. He arranged the formidable cuirassiers of Latour Maubourg outside the gates, in the plain of Frederickstadt, so as to prolong the concave line of defence in that quarter back to the Elbe, and in support of them were placed Teste's brigade; while the centre of the line, which did not appear to be sufficiently guarded, was strengthened by a brigade of Westphalians.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 292, 293; Fain, ii. 264, 265; Grosse Chron. i. 391-394.

It was between three and four o'clock when the

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Allied attack began; but then it was formidable in the extreme. Slowly, and in an admirable order, their deep and massy columns descended the slopes, preceded by a numerous artillery, with the interstices between them filled up with light troops, which kept up an incessant fire on the works before them when they came within range. Wittgenstein, on the extreme right, moved between the Elbe and the Grosse Garten; Kleist, with his Prussians, kept up an incessant fire in that enclosure itself; Colloredo, with three divisions of Austrians, marched straight against the Moczinski Garden and the Dohna, Dippoldiswalde, and Freyberg gates in the centre, while the remainder of the Austrians observed Latour Maubourg's cuirassiers, in the plain on the extreme left. The fire from the intrenched camp and redoubts of Dresden became very warm as they approached. The city was soon enveloped in clouds of smoke, and the hissing projectiles from the heights behind flew over the heads of the advancing masses.[1]

19. Commencement of the storm of Dresden. Aug. 26.

[1] Cath. 218, 219; Thiers, xvi. 298, 299; Lond. 112, 113; Odel. i. 252; Tem. Ocul. ii. 166, 167.

Two noble Britons, Sir Charles Stewart and Sir Robert Wilson, ever foremost where danger was to be confronted or glory won, were with the front of Colloredo's column, and among the first to enter the great redoubt before the Moczinski Garden, through the openings made in the palisades by the fire of the artillery.* "The troops," says Sir

20. Sir Charles Stewart with the Austrians storms the great redoubt.

* "Sir Charles Stewart and Sir Robert Wilson accompanied the storming party, and gallantly entered the redoubt."—CATHCART, 218. Sir Robert Wilson in his private diary gives the following very interesting account of this memorable storm led by him and Sir Charles Stewart: "About four o'clock the cannonade commenced against the enemy, and particularly the redoubt, with fury. In about a quarter of an hour some guns outside the redoubt, and between it and the town, were withdrawn. In another quarter of an hour the fire of the redoubt was much diminished. Count Colloredo perceiving the effect ordered his troops to advance. The distance was above an English mile over open ground. They moved forward; they increased their step; they pressed into a run, gave three cheers, and reached the ditch of the redoubt, which was stockaded in the most formidable manner. While these brave men were endeavouring to tear down the palisades or climb over them to ascend the side of the redoubt—eighteen feet high, smooth, and almost as hard as stone—others drove the enemy by their musketry from the eight guns and out of the redoubt. At the instant of the huzza, Prince Lichtenstein and I could no longer restrain ourselves: we galloped down to the

Charles, "moved forward in the most perfect order to the assault. They approached, on all sides, close to the town, and the Austrians took an advanced redoubt with eight guns, in the most undaunted and gallant style. The work was of the strongest description, situated about sixty yards from the main wall, and nothing could surpass the gallantry with which it was stormed. When they carried the work,

redoubt and animated the men to mount. Some by their bayonets had already loosened the cement in one or two places and reached the crest, but did not like to pass over the parapet, as the fire from the town wall, distant only fifty paces, was too heavy. I remembered what I owed to Austria, England, and myself. I dismounted, climbed over the palisades, with extreme difficulty reached the crest of the parapet, sprang on it, took off my cap and gave three cheers—Charles at my side (who would not leave me, though I repeatedly ordered him not to follow me, as I thought it not necessary to expose him), and then leapt into the battery. My cheers had been answered by all around me of all ranks, and instantly hundreds mounted and manned the redoubt. This being accomplished, I descended. Count Colloredo came up to me, gave me his hand, said various handsome things, and so did all the other generals. It was a satisfactory moment. I then asked Prince Lichtenstein's permission to bring up some guns to batter the wall in breach, and force one of the doors of the town which opened immediately behind the redoubt.

"Having got up the guns and placed them at the distance of sixty paces, we were in hopes of obtaining an entrance; but the enemy, through the loopholes of the walls, killed all the artillerymen of the first six guns. We brought up then another battery of twelve, and while this, under a murderous fire, was battering in breach, Prince Lichtenstein received advice that the enemy was making a sally upon our left with the view of taking us in rear. Stewart, who had come up to the redoubt almost at the time I did, and who as usual made every effort to aid and assist, with his adjutant Colonel Cooke, and Captain Dering, who had shown most conspicuous courage, now accompanied me and Prince Maurice Lichtenstein, who galloped off to make dispositions for the retreat. After ordering forward some cavalry to support the infantry across the plain, we proceeded to another body of troops, and to our great surprise found their batteries and themselves facing our own position and receiving a heavy fire from the ground on which our army had been standing. Around us were at least thirty thousand men, some formed in squares, others in march to form, and a long column in movement. We rode up to the guns confused and amazed. It was then that I began to suspect our situation, and pressing up to Prince Lichtenstein, who at that moment had made the discovery, I said, 'We are not right here.' Prince Lichtenstein replied, 'Follow me;' and I gave this answer to Stewart, who had just come up to me to express his surprise at our position; but he was not quite aware of its actual character. We darted along the column advancing from the town, occasionally calling to the soldiers on the way to clear to the right or left, many of whom were crouching from the shot which momentarily struck around and almost infallibly with effect, and then finding an opening turned to our right, and happily rejoined our own, after having been in the midst of Buonaparte's Guards for a quarter of an hour."—WILSON'S *Private Diary*, ii. 91-94.

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however, they were exposed to a galling fire from the enemy, owing to the want of pioneers to destroy the inner palisades, through which they could not penetrate further. The enemy fled from it only to shelter themselves behind new defences; manning the thick walls of the town, in which it was impossible without a long and continued fire of heavy artillery to make a breach. The French, with the means of resistance which a strong town affords, now held in check the troops which had so gallantly carried and entered the outworks. The artillery, though brought up to within a hundred paces of the wall, was unable to batter it or make any material impression. On the right, Kleist made great progress in the Grosse Garten, from which he entirely expelled the enemy; but there too it was for the like reason found impossible to carry the success further. It was now becoming dark, and it was known that in the course of the day the enemy had received great reinforcements. Schwartzenberg, therefore, gave the signal to retreat, and the gallant Austrians retired from the redoubt they had won."[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Aug. 31, 1813, MS.

21. Sortie of Napoleon's Guards.

In effect Napoleon had been so much strengthened since the assault began that the balance now inclined to his side. The danger was extreme when the Austrians carried the great redoubt in front of the Moczinski Garden, but in other quarters affairs for the French wore a much more favourable aspect. At the barriers of Pilnitz and Pirna the commanders felt so much confidence that they threw open the gates of the barriers, and the Old Guard, despite the order of Napoleon forbidding the use of that reserve, advanced to the outside, and exchanged vollies within pistol-shot with the Russian grenadiers. The same thing was done at the barrier of Freyberg on the French right centre; while in the extreme right the formidable cuirassiers of Latour Maubourg remained in undisturbed possession of the plain of Frederickstadt. But meanwhile vast reinforcements were every hour arriving to the beleaguered garrison. During the whole

afternoon the passage of troops over both the stone bridge and those of boats from the right bank was incessant. By nine o'clock the whole Young Guard had arrived, and the heads of Marmont's corps were beginning to cross the bridge. Being now at the head of 60,000 men, which were incessantly and rapidly increasing, Napoleon deemed himself strong enough to resume the offensive. He ordered the gates to be thrown open, and 30,000 of the best troops in the French army commenced a sally.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 299, 300; Lond. 114; Fain, ii. 270, 271; Odel. i. 253, 254; Tem. Ocul. ii. 169, 170.

22. Which is attended by great success.

The weather, which for some days previously had been serene and intensely hot, now suddenly changed; the atmosphere was filled with clouds, and ere long the rain began to fall in torrents. Regardless of the storm, the dense masses of the Young Guard rushed furiously out from the barriers of Pilnitz and Pirna, led by Ney and Mortier, while a rapid and well-sustained fusilade from the windows and walls adjoining the gates covered the sally, and checked the fire of the enemy. Little anticipating so vehement an onset when they expected only a stubborn resistance, the Allies first hesitated, and then fell back. This was the turning-point of the fight; instantly the scales turned, and soon became overcharged against the Coalition. Rapidly issuing from the barriers, and forming in line outside the houses, the French Guards soon began to gain ground on the enemy. At all points they were successful; for the Allied troops, deeming the day gained, and being in disorder within or close to the works, were in no condition to repel such an attack. One division of the Young Guard, with loud cheers, regained the blood-stained redoubt of Moczinski; the others drove the Prussians from the suburb of Pirna, dislodged them from the Grosse Garten, and rolled back the Russians from the barrier of Pilnitz. While at the other extremity of the line, on the French right, Teste had made a similar sally with his division from the gate of Freyberg; and Murat, joining him with his cuirassiers, had

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advanced into the plain beyond. It was no easy matter to draw off the troops in presence of such pursuers without serious loss; and in the great redoubt, in particular, the pressure was extreme. By the skill and coolness of Prince John of Lichtenstein, who commanded there, the retreat from the covered work was effected with a surprising degree of order. Sir Charles Stewart's gallantry here again brought him into imminent danger. "I was fortunate enough," says he, "with Prince John of Lichtenstein and my aide-de-camp, to gallop through a French column, and we were in the rear of their batteries before we were aware of our danger. In this extremity our only chance was to dash through, trusting to our being not discovered in the *mêlée*, which in the obscurity of the evening occurred." At length, after darkness had fairly set in, the Allies drew off at all points, and regained the ground they had occupied before the attack commenced, after sustaining a loss of 5000 men, while the French, who fought chiefly under cover, were not weakend by more than half the number.[1]

[1] Wilson, ii. Lond. 114-119; Thiers, xvi. 300-302; Fain, ii. 270, 271; Bout. 29; St Cyr, iv. 164-166.

23. Forces on both sides on the next day.

During the night which followed, and in the midst of a terrific storm of rain, the expected reinforcements continued to arrive to the French army in Dresden; and by daybreak on the following morning the whole corps of Marmont and Victor were on the ground. These, with the Guard's reserve cavalry and Teste's division, formed a mass of 120,000 men, of whom 20,000 were admirable cavalry. The strength of this force, great as it was, was much increased by the unity of direction by which it was governed, the enthusiastic spirit by which, from the success of the preceding day, it was animated, and its favourable situation, backed by a fortress, proved to be impregnable to a *coup-de-main*, in its rear, which afforded the means of passing any number of troops unobserved from one quarter to another, so as to give every facility to a sudden and unforeseen attack upon an unguarded point of the enemy's line. The Allies were in somewhat greater

numerical force, for, notwithstanding the losses of the preceding day, they would, when Klenau came up, be above 140,000 strong; but this slight advantage was more than compensated by the distraction arising from three separate commands, the jealousies already beginning with ill success between the armies, the discouragement arising from repeated defeats, and the disadvantage of toiling round a wide circumference, while the enemy's attacks from its centre might be suddenly directed at pleasure against any part of the line. This disadvantage, already sufficiently great, was enhanced by the state of the weather on the following day, which, charged with thick mist, and at intervals heavy rain, at once prevented the movements of the enemy around the walls from being seen till they were close upon the Allied outposts, and prevented the firearms from going off when the charges of the cuirassiers, emerging through the blue mist, were upon them.[1]

[1] Lond. 119; Odel. ii. 255, 256; Bout. 29-31; Thiers, xvi. 301, 302.

24. Disposition of the French troops.

The disposition of his troops, made by the Emperor at daybreak on the 27th, was as follows: The right wing, under Murat, composed of the infantry of Victor and the cavalry of Latour Maubourg, was stationed in front of the Lobda barrier, in the level meadows, stretching along the banks of the Elbe towards Priesnitz, in a situation admirably adapted for the action of horse; the centre, under the Emperor in person, included the corps of Marmont and St Cyr, with the infantry and cavalry of the Old Guard in reserve; on the left Ney had the command, and under him the four strong divisions of the Young Guard, with Kellermann's horse, were massed on the banks of the Elbe beyond the suburb of Pirna, and completed the concave armament round the city. Napoleon's plan was to act vigorously on either wing, in each of which he had placed 40,000 disposable troops, and to stand on the defensive in the centre, under the shelter of the formidable redoubts, the strength of which had been so severely tried on the preceding day. He had there concentrated the

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whole artillery of the Guard, consisting of a hundred pieces. It was a matter of impossibility, or at least of extreme difficulty, to defeat 120,000 men with 600 guns, under such a leader, and so placed. But in the event of any considerable disaster being incurred, their situation was perilous in the extreme; for they fought with their backs to the Elbe, traversed only by two bridges, and their faces towards France, having between them and it a mass of 140,000 men occupying their whole communications, and cutting them off at once from all supplies or reinforcements from the Rhine. The Allies, if defeated, were hardly in a less perilous predicament, for they fought, cut off from their magazines and resources, with their faces to the Elbe and the Vistula, and directly in their rear, if they sought to regain Bohemia, was Vandamme with his corps occupying the principal pass through which they had issued, and prepared to offer the most decided resistance to an attempt to get through. Never were two great armies in a more extraordinary situation, and never did two commanders play a great game with more audacity and resolution.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 303, 304; Vaudoncourt, i. 114; St Cyr, iv. 110, 111; Lond. 114.

25. Disposition of the Allies.

On their side, the Allies made the following dispositions, some of which were faulty in the highest degree: On their extreme right Wittgenstein commanded his Russian veterans, who stood on the road to Pirna. Next to him was Kleist with his Prussians between Gruna and Strehlen. In the centre was Schwartzenberg, with the Austrian corps of Colloredo and Chastellar, and Bianchi's grenadiers in reserve; while beyond the deep ravine of Tharandt, on the extreme left, were placed Giulay's Austrians and Metzko's division of Klenau's men, the only one which had come up. But a fatal error was committed in the latter part of these dispositions. Not only was the left of the line, consisting of level meads, intrusted to Metzko's men, who were the youngest and least effective part of the Austrian army, but there was a vacant space stretching from the foot of the heights of Wolfnitz to Priesnitz,

which was left wholly unoccupied, being intended for the remainder of Klenau's men, who were yet on the march, and must arrive exhausted with fatigue. This was the more reprehensible, that the troops that were placed there were on level ground eminently favourable for the action of cavalry, that they stood in front of the formidable cuirassiers of Latour Maubourg, 12,000, strong, the very best horse in the French army, and that, if they had been drawn back half a mile to the rear, or not pushed across the steep defile of Tharandt, which separated them from the main army, they would have been in perfect safety. The entire force of the Allies was about 140,000 men; 20,000 having been left in the neighbourhood of Pirna to watch Vandamme, who had reached that point with nearly 40,000 men.[1]

[1] St Cyr, i. 111, 112; Bout. 32; Vaud. i. 154, 155; Jom. iv. 390, 391; Thiers, xvi. 304, 305.

26. Commencement of the battle on the 27th.

Napoleon was not the man to fail to turn to the best account the faults of his adversaries and his own advantageous position. After supping with the King of Saxony, he spent the night in the midst of the bivouacs of the Old Guard, seated near a blazing fire, dictating orders to his generals, which were of the most luminous and precise description. The onset was to be made by the two wings, which were strongly reinforced for that purpose, and a cannonade only to be kept up in the centre to engage the enemy's attention and distract it as to the real object of attack. The designs of the French Emperor were seconded to a wish, by the thick mist and drizzling rain which fell all day, and completely concealed the movements of his troops from the enemy. Jomini urged the Allied sovereigns to accumulate their force on the enemy's left, and cut off Poinatowski and Vandamme, who were at Zittau and Pirna, from the rest of the army. But though this measure promised great results, it was contrary to Schwartzenberg's ideas, which were entirely rested on the project of separating the French right from its communications with Torgau and Leipsic. Meanwhile, Klenau's men had only in part come up, and such as had

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done so were excessively fatigued and in very bad order —a state of things of all others the most perilous in presence of the enormous mass of French cavalry which lay in their front, concealed by the mist. The better to conceal his designs, Murat caused Victor's infantry to occupy the village of Löbda, in their front, from whence they advanced in columns, supported by a formidable artillery, as if for a direct onset. Meanwhile, when the enemy's attention was fully occupied with this attack, the cavalry turned the Austrian extreme left flank, and drew up almost perpendicularly to their line. Suddenly, when the fire was warmest in front, Murat's horsemen, 12,000 strong, burst through the mist, and enveloped Metzko's division, which was next. Notwithstanding the suddenness of the onset, the Austrians rapidly threw themselves into square, and steadily withstood the repeated charges of the formidable French cuirassiers. Seeing this, Murat ordered a squadron of lancers to form the front of the column and lead the charge. The lancers broke down the line of infantry, and made an aperture through which the cuirassiers, rapidly following, poured in and filled the square. The whole division was either cut down or made prisoners. A brigade of the division of Maurice Lichtenstein, sent up to their support, shared the same fate. In a quarter of an hour the whole left wing of the Allies was broken, 30 guns taken, and General Metzko, with 60 officers and above 10,000 privates, were made prisoners.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 313, 314; Cath. 225-227; Bout. 32, 33; St Cyr, iv. 111, 112; Jom. iv. 391, 392; Marmont, v. 153.

27. Mortal wound of Moreau in the centre.

While this decisive success was gained on the French left, a heavy fire was kept up from the French centre, and several charges of cavalry took place with various success, chiefly intended to distract the attention of the enemy, and divert them from the real point of attack. The Austrian batteries, however, placed on the heights of Raecknitz and Scharnitz in a concave semicircle, and on higher ground, replied with advantage to the French fire, and several of their charges of horse were repulsed with great

gallantry by the Russian cavalry of the Guard. One discharge, however, from a battery of the Guard produced very serious consequences. A French column, supposed by Jomini to be a part of the Young Guard, but in reality one of St Cyr's divisions, was approaching, and an attack was expected. The rest must be given in the words of an eyewitness. "The Emperor of Russia," says Sir George Cathcart, "in conversation with Lord Cathcart and General Moreau, the one on his right, the other on his left, was riding slowly along the front towards the right, where this intended attack seemed likely to take place, between Raecknitz and Strehlen; they turned directly to the front, attracted by a movement of Russian cavalry. At this instant a cannon-shot struck Moreau, who at the moment might have been half a horse's length in advance of the Emperor, on the right leg, and, passing through the horse, shattered his left knee. The horse plunged forwards about thirty yards and fell dead. Moreau, though suffering great torture, said to those who hastened to extricate him from his wounded horse, 'Tell the Emperor that I am willing to sacrifice my limbs in his service, for his cause is just.'" [1]

[1] Cath. 229, 230; Thiers, xvi. 314, 315; Lond. 115.

28. A retreat ordered.

The Emperor of Russia rode at once to the spot where Moreau was lying, and caused the Cossacks of his guard to make a litter for his removal by putting their pikes through some cloaks. He was then carried off, suffering great pain, which he bore with heroic constancy for some days, when he expired, to the great grief of the Emperor and the whole army. After he was removed, the Emperor turned his horse and proceeded at a slow walk, conversing with Lord Cathcart, to the high ground to the right of Strehlen, to superintend an attack which had been ordered by Barclay de Tolly, with the reserve, on Ney's wing, which, in pressing on through the low grounds between the Gross Garten and the Elbe, had exposed its flank. On his way he met Jomini, who had been sent with the order to Barclay a short time before, and now returned

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with his answer. Barclay submitted that it would be fruitless, and even inexpedient, to attempt such an attack against the dense masses of the enemy's infantry, under cover of the buildings and works of Dresden; and that if he brought down his guns to support the attack, and was obliged to retire, which might very probably be the case, he would probably lose them, from the extreme wetness of the ground rendering it next to impossible to draw them off. The Emperor saw the justice of this opinion, which, indeed, soon became obvious to all; for the rain came to fall with such violence that hostilities were in a manner, as a matter of necessity, suspended on both sides. The King of Prussia soon after came up with Schwartzenberg, the latter of whom communicated, in a secret conference, the disaster on the left, which was the more alarming that it had put Murat in possession of the Freyberg road; while Vandamme, debouching from Koenigstein, had won that on the right by Pirna, so that there remained to the army only the centre road by Dippoldiswalde. In these circumstances retreat had become a matter of necessity; and it was wisely and unanimously agreed to by the Allied sovereigns and generals.[1]

[1] Cath. 231, 232; Lond. 121; Thiers, xvi. 345, 346.

29. Disasters and difficulties with which it was attended.

The extraordinary severity of the rain, which hitherto had been so serious a disadvantage to the Allies, now proved a very great protection to them, for, coupled with the extreme exhaustion of the French troops from the fatigues of the preceding days, it rendered pursuit on that day impossible, and even concealed the movement from the enemy. But for this circumstance the retreat of the Allies by a single road practicable for carriages, that of Dippoldiswalde, with a few mountain paths which could be traversed only by horsemen or foot soldiers, would have been disastrous in the extreme. As it was, the confusion soon became very great, and the losses heavy in proportion. The carriages, caissons, waggons, and artillery belonging the army were little short of 10,000 in number, drawn by above 30,000 horses, besides the cavalry, who were

20,000 more, and how to get this enormous multitude of vehicles and animals over the mountains by a *single road*, with a powerful enemy thundering in pursuit, seemed a task of the most appalling difficulty. The losses during the next three days, especially in guns and materiel, were very considerable, but hardly so great as might have been expected, owing to the severity of the weather and the extreme fatigue of the French troops, which rendered an active pursuit almost impossible. The Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia, with Lord Cathcart and Sir Charles Stewart, slept the first night at Dippoldiswalde, while Napoleon returned to Dresden. The ill-fated Moreau, who had both his legs amputated, was borne in a litter on men's shoulders for three or four days, when death put a period to his sufferings. By the retreat the first evening the Allies gained a march upon the enemy, which, in the circumstances, was a great advantage. Next day, however, an active pursuit was commenced, and Murat's cavalry, with the corps of Victor, St Cyr, and Marmont, were ordered to the front. The confusion on the line of retreat by Dippoldiswalde and Altenberg soon became extreme; and although the rearguard made a gallant resistance, it was impossible to prevent thirty guns and seven hundred waggons falling into the hands of the enemy, besides some thousand prisoners.[1]

[1] Cath. 233, 234; Marm. v. 156-171; Lond. 120-122; Thiers, xvi. 317-320.

30. Great discouragement in the Allied army, and their losses.

The extreme pressure and confusion on the Dippoldiswalde road, which soon got blocked up with broken-down guns, dead horses, and ruined vehicles, ere long taught the Allied sovereigns that it was indispensable, at all hazards, to open up other lines of retreat. That by Pirna and Peterswalde was already seized and commanded by Vandamme, who, having issued, as already mentioned, during the battle of the 27th from Koenigstein, had driven Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, to whom it had been intrusted, from the important pass by the camp of Pirna. It was indispensable, at any cost, to reopen this important defile, and the duty of doing so

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was intrusted to Count Ostermann Tolstoy with the Russian Guards; while Barclay de Tolly, with the main body of their army and Kleist's Prussians was to follow that road, the Austrians were to retire by the middle road by which they had come, by Dippoldiswalde, Altenberg, and Zinwald to Töplitz, and Klenau's men were to force their way the best way they could by Freyberg to Marienberg and the great road from Leipsic to Prague. Following these directions, Barclay, who was with the head of the Russian column, soon came in sight, on the Peterswalde road, of a fearful scene of confusion, where the retiring baggage-waggons and guns were brought to a stand by Vandamme's columns, which appeared directly in their front. Seeing this, and knowing that every instant was precious, he took upon himself to order his Russians to turn by a cross hill-road to the right, which led into the central chaussée by Altenberg, leaving Prince Eugene of Würtemberg to retire alone by the Peterswalde road. The execution of this order by Ostermann brought on a warm altercation between him and Prince Eugene, as the latter anticipated, with reason, total destruction if he were left alone to defile by Pirna, having Vandamme either on his flank or rear the whole way. He represented that if Vandamme were left alone he would march straight to Töplitz and block up the retreat of the whole Allied army. Yielding assent to these considerations, which were obviously well founded, Ostermann Tolstoy, who, in addition to the most undaunted personal courage, possessed the rarer gift of moral resolution, took upon himself to disregard Barclay's orders and advance along with his gallant comrades on the Peterswalde road. He wrote to Barclay explaining the reason of his conduct, which he was well aware induced certain dangers, but was likely to shun others still more formidable. His resolution met with deserved success. The two chiefs, with their respective corps, advanced side by side. Prince Eugene stormed and occupied in force the Kohlberg, a lofty eminence

overhanging and commanding the road occupied by Vandamme's men, who had not been able, owing to the heavy rains and dreadful state of the roads, to bring up their heavy artillery. Secured by this success on their flank, Ostermann, with the Russian Guards, passed on and got through the perilous strait, keeping the road to Peterswalde and Töplitz. These movements were of the highest importance, and deserve to be carefully studied, for they immediately induced events of the utmost moment, which commenced the long series of calamities that led to the fall of Napoleon.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 322, 323; Marm. v. 157, 158; Cath. 234, 235; Lond. 119-122; St Cyr, iv. 111, 114; Wilson, ii. 250.

31. Great advantages thus gained by Napoleon, and discouragement of the Allies.

The French Emperor had now gained a very great advantage; so great, indeed, as to have wellnigh compensated all his disasters, and entirely reinstated his affairs. Since the recommencement of hostilities, he had been successful in every operation where he commanded in person; had repulsed Blucher with serious loss, and defeated the Grand Allied Army, with the loss of at least 40,000 men, and eighty pieces of cannon. The total loss of the Allies in Bohemia, including those cut off in the battle of Culm and during the retreat, was little, if at all, less than 80,000.* Their vast army, still 120,000 strong, was driven to a disastrous retreat, attended with the most serious losses; prisoners and stragglers by the thousand, were daily brought in; guns abandoned, caissons blown up, and baggage captured at every step. On the other hand, the losses of the French in these encounters, taken together, had not exceeded 15,000 men; and while despair and recrimination pervaded the Allied ranks, the *prestige* of victory, the confidence of success, had passed over to the other side. "Every one," says Sir Charles Stewart, "endeavoured to divert the storm of blame from himself, and no one would own the project

* Sir R. Wilson makes their loss still greater. "*Sept. 20th.*—Last night we were making a calculation of the loss of the Allied army which formed in Bohemia; and it appears that there is a deficiency of 36,000 Austrians, 40,000 Russians, and very near 30,000 Prussians up to yesterday, including killed, wounded, and prisoners of all descriptions."—WILSON'S *Private Diary*, ii. 136.

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that had just failed. Much of the difficulty arose from the perplexing state in which the chief commands were held, which was so divided between the Emperor and Prince Schwartzenberg, that it was difficult to say with whom responsibility really rested. The latter was called upon to give explanations of the orders he had given, when he should have been forming fresh combinations. Only half his plans, with those of the Emperor, who was aided by Moreau till he was disabled by his wounds, were adopted; and where they were so, much delay always occurred in communicating them to the generals in command of the armies of different nations. The officers round the Emperor depreciated Prince Schwartzenberg's abilities, and were jealous of his direction. He himself said with truth, it was no easy matter to command an army when Emperors and Kings were at headquarters. Responsibility apparently resided nowhere. No one could tell why the whole mortars of the army were not brought to the front to bombard it during the assault, or how the troops were sent forward without scaling-ladders to enable them to surmount the ramparts. The movements beyond the passes, and the attack on Dresden, were undertaken against the advice of General Moreau, whose heroism, after he received his wound, was the theme of universal admiration. From the general complexion of affairs, it appeared that if Buonaparte persevered in making propositions, there was great probability they would be listened to."[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Sept. 3, 1813, MS.; and Lond. 120-122; Vaud. i. 127; Jom. iv. 397; Thiers, xvi. 322, 323.

Such was the prosperous situation of the French Emperor's affairs, when their face was entirely changed, and he was precipitated from one misfortune to another, which at length drove him from the throne of Charlemagne to the rock of St Helena. They all originated in his own faults, and the undue ascendancy of an imperious and overbearing disposition.

To understand how this came about, it is to be recollected that, as already mentioned, Napoleon's plan of the

campaign originally was to accumulate an imposing force of 130,000 men in the neighbourhood of Pirna, wherewith to strike at the communications of the Allies with their base of operations in Bohemia, while St Cyr, with 25,000, made head against them under cover of the ramparts and palisades of Dresden. When the advance of the Allies in great force to Dresden rendered it necessary for him to fly to the assistance of the menaced capital, he by no means abandoned his favourite project of striking at the enemy's communications—he only changed the party by whom the blow was to be struck. His plan, a very obvious and reasonable one, now was to intrust Vandamme with stopping the return of the Allies, and himself, with 100,000 men, to assail them in rear when entangled in the passes of the mountains and overwhelmed with an enormous and unmanageable mass of artillery and baggage. Before setting out to relieve Dresden, he sent for General Haxo, and thus addressed him: "Vandamme is beyond the Elbe, near Pirna; he will find himself on the rear of the enemy, whose anxiety to get possession of Dresden is evidently extreme. My design was to have followed up that movement by my whole army: it would perhaps have been the most effectual way to have brought matters to a speedy issue with the enemy; but I am anxious for Dresden — I cannot bring myself to sacrifice that town. Some hours must elapse before I can reach it; but I have decided, not without regret, to change my plan, and to march to its relief. Vandamme is in sufficient strength to play an important part in that general movement, and inflict an essential injury on the enemy. *Let him advance from Pirna to Gieshübel, and gain the heights of Petrswalde;* let him maintain himself there, occupy all the defiles, and from that impregnable post wait the issue of events before Dresden. To him is destined the lot of receiving the sword of the vanquished;[1] but he will require *sang froid:* above all, he must not be imposed

32. Napoleon's plan of operations.

[1] Fain. ii. 259, 260.

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upon by a rabble of fugitives. Explain fully my intentions to Vandamme: tell him what I expect from him. Never can he have a finer opportunity of earning his marshal's baton."

33. Forces under Vandamme.

These orders placed Vandamme, when they came to be executed, in a situation of great danger though of the utmost importance. He had at Pirna 52 battalions, 29 squadrons, and 80 guns; and they mustered 27,000 infantry and 3000 horse. The Emperor put under him, in addition to his own corps, a division of St Cyr's corps, a brigade of Victor and Corbineau's cavalry, which brought up his force to fully 40,000. Immediately after the battle of Dresden, Mortier was advanced to Pirna with the Young Guard, 32,000 strong, distant about eight leagues from the scene of action, to support him if necessary. The Emperor, at the same time, issued orders to St Cyr, Marmont, Victor, and Murat, to follow close on the enemy's footsteps, and drive them on towards Töplitz, where he expected Vandamme would be ready to receive them. This done, *he halted the Young Guard at Pirna*, leaving Vandamme to prosecute, alone and unsupported, his perilous movement into the rear of the Allied army at Töplitz.[1]

Aug. 29.

[1] St Cyr, iv. 128, 129; Thiers, xvi. 327, 328; Bout. 40, 41; Vaud. i. 158.

34. Great importance of the possession of Töplitz.

That village was thus destined to become the theatre of events not less important in their consequences than the victory of Platæa, or the battle of the Metaurus. All the roads from Saxony into Bohemia over the Erzgebirge range lead to, and intersect each other in, Töplitz, which lies at the foot of the mountains on the southern side in the Bohemian plain. If, therefore, Vandamme could, in obedience to his orders, make himself master of that important point before the Allies reached it, he would be in a situation to prevent their retiring columns, detached from each other and toiling through the passes, from debouching from the mountains; while Murat, at the head of his redoubtable horse, and Victor, on the right road, and Marmont and St Cyr in the

centre, pressed the rear of their columns; and Mortier, with the Guard on the left road, could advance unopposed to Vandamme's support. They might thus be exposed to almost certain ruin when attacked in rear and blocked up in front, while entangled with many thousand carriages among those narrow defiles and inhospitable ridges. On the other hand, if the French under Vandamme were defeated by the retiring masses of the Allied Grand Army, who would of necessity fight with the energy of despair to force their way through, a still greater catastrophe might be apprehended by Napoleon, as he would then be entirely cut off from the Elbe, and obliged to lay down his arms in the Bohemian plains. Thus both parties had equal motives for exertion; both saw clearly the vital importance of the contest; and the meanest soldier in the ranks was as strongly impressed with this as his chief. Vandamme was well aware of the perils with which his mission was attended, but he was a man of resolution, calm, experienced, and gifted with *coup d'œil* in danger: he knew that the Young Guard was close in his rear at Pirna, and, never doubting that he would be supported by that important body, he boldly set out, hoping to win his marshal's baton under the walls of Culm.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 398, 399; Fain, ii. 312, 313; Bout. 40, 41; Thiers, xvi. 328, 329.

35. Advance to Culm, and extreme terror at Töplitz. Aug. 29.

In the race to Töplitz, however, the Allied generals outstripped Vandamme. He did not receive intelligence of the result of the battle on the 27th till mid-day on the 28th, and it was too late then to occupy the pass in force, or do more than seize the heights overhanging it on the eastern side, from whence, as already mentioned, he was driven by a vigorous effort on the part of Prince Eugene of Wirtemberg, supported by Ostermann Tolstoy's grenadiers. Thus the pass was opened in time to let the Russian general get through into the neighbourhood of Töplitz. But his force was considerably reduced by that rude encounter, and still more by the extreme fatigue they had undergone during the preceding week, insomuch that they

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could not muster above 14,000 sabres and bayonets to oppose Vandamme, who, with nearly triple the force, was descending the mountains to make himself master of Töplitz. No sooner did his approach, with a force thought to be overwhelming, become known at that place, where the King of Prussia and whole *corps diplomatique* were assembled, than the utmost terror seized the persons assembled, with the exception of that monarch himself, who alone preserved his *sang froid.* The *corps diplomatique* all took to flight, hurrying across the fields towards Deutsch Geyserberg and Laun, and nothing but the personal presence and courage of the King preserved anything like order in the rear of the fighting columns.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 314; Jom. iv. 399; Bout. 40; Thiers, xvi. 329, 330; Lond. 125.

36. Vandamme's first battle at Culm.

Vandamme, conceiving he had only a beaten army to contend with, and recollecting the words of Napoleon, that he should not allow himself to be imposed upon by a rabble of fugitives, descended from the mountains, deeming himself advancing to a certain victory. He soon found his mistake. In the first instance, he made the attack with only nine battalions on the Russian left wing, which was quickly repulsed. An obstinate action now ensued along the whole line: the French general brought up Duvernet's division, which restored the combat; the villages of Straden and Priesten were taken and retaken several times, but the latter finally remained in the hands of the Russians. The weight of the French attack, however, was directed against the Russian left, which was violently assailed by Vandamme in person with forces three times superior to those to whom they were opposed. The danger was extreme to the Allies; the Grand Army was ruined if the Eichswalde pass was reached.* But Oster-

* "The enemy now pressed Ostermann, and, having occupied the village of Kraupen, menaced seizure of the embouchure of Eichswalde, at the distance of a werst, where it was supposed the Prussian corps, &c., would attempt to break out. Indeed the danger seemed imminent, for the whole army still remained fixed in the mountains, unable to move from the breaking down of carriages and other impediments. The distance from Kraupen to their embouchure was but five wersts, and, if that pass was gained, ruin was inevitable for above a hundred and fifty thousand men."—WILSON'S *Private Diary*, ii. 601.

mann brought up the three noble regiments of Russian Guards — the Preobazinsky, Bonnet d'Or, and Simonefsky; and those incomparable troops presented a barrier to their assailants which all their efforts were unable to break. In vain the French artillery closing to within half-musket shot, made huge chasms by discharges of grape in their ranks; steadily the veterans closed to the centre as the apertures were made, and, standing astride the dead bodies of their comrades, still presented an undaunted front. By this heroic resistance time was gained for the arrival of Count Diebitch, who came up with the grenadiers, and the Grand-duke Constantine with some cavalry of the Russian Guard. By their aid this formidable attack was arrested; the Russians retained their position in the centre; and, late in the evening, Vandamme, finding he could make no serious impression, drew off to the position from which he had descended in the forenoon to make the attack. The conduct of the Russian Guard on this occasion never was surpassed. "A body of troops," says Sir Charles Stewart, "consisting of about 8000, held in check during the day at least 30,000 men. As to the dauntless conduct of the Russian Imperial Guard, were I to attempt to describe to you the admiration I felt at witnessing their reckless bravery, I should fail for words to express it. The light cavalry of the Guard, consisting of the Polish and dragoon regiments, charged columns of infantry, regardless of every disadvantage or rule of modern warfare. If the troops had not held their ground, the columns of the army and the artillery retiring to Altenberg would have been ruined. The admirable conduct of the King of Prussia on this occasion was the theme of universal praise. Ostermann's corps lost 3200 men; the cavalry took two standards and 400 prisoners."[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Sept. 4, 1813, MS.; Thiers, xvi. 330, 331; Fain, ii. 314; Kausler, 654.

Had Vandamme been his own master, or been at liberty to follow the dictates of prudence, he would have retreated after this rude shock, and rejoined the Young Guard at

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37. Preparations for the second battle of Culm. Aug. 30.

Pirna before any more formidable masses of the retreating enemy fell upon him. But the imperious commands of the Emperor left him no alternative; he was compelled at all hazards to push on to Töplitz. In the course of the night of the 29th he received a fresh order from Berthier, brought to him by an officer of the Swiss etat-major, enjoining him to push on without delay to Töplitz. *On his arrival there* he was to open a sealed letter delivered to him, which he was aware contained his brevet as field-marshal. Thus impelled alike by authority and ambition, Vandamme made preparations for renewing the conflict with his whole forces on the following day. Knowing that the Young Guard, 30,000 strong, was in his rear at Pirna, he never doubted he would be supported, and, notwithstanding the stubborn resistance of the enemy, anticipated a glorious victory, which would complete the destruction of the whole right wing of the Allies. On their side, however, the Russians and Prussians made good use of their time. In the course of the night the King of Prussia, who, from his headquarters, which he had never moved, at Töplitz, had virtually obtained the command in that quarter, sent information to Kleist, who was still in the mountains near Ebersdorf, of what had occurred, and urged him to use the utmost efforts to gain the hill and defile of Nollendorf, through which the road to Pirna ran, while the enemy was engaged in front with the Allies, who were under the immediate command of Barclay de Tolly. Orders were at the same time sent to that general and Ostermann to make good their ground at all hazards at Culm, assuring them that they should be strongly supported in the course of the day by both the infantry and cavalry of the Guard. Thus the two armies were strangely interlaced on the same road; desperate blows could not fail to be interchanged on the following day; and victory would probably remain to the party who was able to bring up the largest masses, and strike the hardest, at the decisive time and place.[1]

[1] Cath. 237, 238; Thiers, xvi. 331-333; Jom. iv. 402, 403; Fain, ii. 315; St Cyr, iv. 128, 129.

38. Measures on both sides immediately before the battle.

Vandamme's dispositions were soon made. He took post on the high ground in front of Culm, looking towards Töplitz, his right resting on the monntains, his centre crossing the great road to Töplitz, his left in the plain extending towards the hamlet of Karwitz. On the side of the Allies, the Austrian division under Prince Philip of Hesse Homburg, with the whole Allied cavalry, was on the right; the Russians under Ostermann, with the grenadiers, in the centre and left; the Russian Guards in reserve, supported by a great battery of 100 guns. Count Colloredo, with the 1st Austrian corps, had orders to make a flank movement to his right, and then to turn and attack the enemy's left. Kleist, with his Prussians, was to gain the summit of the defile of Nollendorf, directly in the enemy's rear. The forces thus accumulated were now greatly superior to those of the enemy; they amounted to fully 60,000 men, while the French troops, weakened by the combats and fatigues of the preceding days, could not number 40,000.* The Young Guard, by Napoleon's orders, lay inactive at Pirna, twenty miles in the rear; while Vandamme, imprudently thrust forward into the heart of the Allied army, was combating with forces nearly double his own, in circumstances where defeat, from his line of retreat being cut off, was utter ruin. To make the faulty dispositions of the French Emperor complete, he committed what Marmont justly calls the "inconceivable fault of not even letting Vandamme know that he had recalled his Guard, and that he was not to be supported."[1] †

[1] Marm. v. 165; Thiers, xvi. 340, 341; Jom. iv. 401, 402; Lond. 126, 127; Cath. 238, 239.

* "Les Alliés supposaient à Vandamme tout au plus 30,000 hommes, tandis qu'il en avait 40,000 sous la main."—THIERS, xvi. 342.

† "Ayant reçu la nouvelle de l'échec eprouvé par le Maréchal Oudinot devant Berlin et des revers du Maréchal Macdonald sur le Katzbach, Napoléon résolut de rester, *de rapeller sa Garde, et il eut le tort incroyable de ne pas faire prevenir Vandamme.* On a dit qu'il s'était mis en route, et que se trouvant tout à coup indisposé il avait rétrogradé. Ce fait est inexact; et le Général Gersdorff, général Saxon, m'a declare formellement qui n'ayant pas quitté un moment le palais pendant le 28 et 29, il avait la certitude absolue que Napoléon n'était pas sorti ces jours là de Dresde. La Garde seule s'était mis en mouvement, et il la rappella ainsi que je viens de dire. Vandamme se trouva donc seule et

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The result of the battle, fought under such circumstances, could not be doubtful; important, indeed decisive of the campaign, as the success gained proved, it was less glorious to the Allied arms than the heroic resistance of the Russian Guards and grenadiers, to forces double their own on the preceding day. The French left, charged in flank by the Russian cavalry whilst engaged in front by Colloredo's Austrians, fell into disorder, and was cast back upon the centre in front of Culm. The Austrians, in admirable order, advanced steadily through the French line, at right angles to its front; and Vandamme in vain endeavoured to stop their progress by a fresh brigade which he brought up, but which was overthrown in its turn. At the same time, the Russians were gradually but steadily gaining ground on the right, over their adversaries posted on the slope of the mountains, and had taken three guns. Nothing, however, was as yet decided, when at ten o'clock a rolling of carriages was heard on the heights behind, on the road to Pirna, followed by the discharges of tirailleurs on either side of the steep declivity by which the road passed. The French soldiers, believing it was the Young Guard under Mortier coming up to their support, prepared to resume the offensive, and hoped yet to accomplish their mission by wresting Töplitz from the Allies. The latter were proportionally depressed, for they did not venture to hope it could be friends coming in this way, directly in the rear of the French; and the impression was universal that it was fresh troops arriving, who would wrest from them a triumph otherwise within their grasp. "Vain illusion! terrible awakening!" says Theirs. Vandamme hastened to the rear, never doubting he was to meet the Young Guard, and on a nearer approach he saw the Allied uniforms![1] It was Kleist, with 18,000 Prussians, who, having been informed by the King of Prussia of what was going forward at Culm, and directed to operate against

[1] Thiers, xvi. 344, 345; Lond. 124, 125; Cath. 239; St Cyr, iv. 129; Fain, ii. 316, 317.

sans appui dans la plaine de Culm. Vainqueur le 29, il fut accablé le 30 par les forces immenses que se jeteront sur lui."—MARMONT, v. 165.

the French flank, had left the chaussée of Altenberg, along which he was retiring, followed by St Cyr, and taken the bold resolution of crossing by mountain-paths to the Peterswalde road, which he reached just in time to appear on the rear of Vandamme in the very heat of the action.

40. Total defeat of Vandamme.

Vandamme's case was desperate, but the stout soldier neither lost his presence of mind nor gave up hope. Having consulted with General Haxo, he arrived at the conclusion that there was nothing to be done but to form his troops into a solid mass, and, at all hazards, force his way through Kleist's columns. To effect this desperate assault, he drew back his two best brigades, Quyot and Reuss, which had been advanced to the front, and, forming them in close column, gave them orders to charge up the pass, right through the Prussians. Dunesme's brigade was charged on the left with the onerous duty of restraining Colloredo and Knoring's dragoons; while in the centre, on the heights of Culm, a large battery was placed, supported by the brigade Doucet, with instructions to fire with the utmost vigour on the Russians under Milaradowitch, who were opposed to them, and when they could resist no longer, to abandon their guns to their fate. But all these efforts were unavailing. "Schwartzenberg," says Sir Charles Stewart, "intrusted Barclay de Tolly with the principal direction of the attack, and he had 6000 grenadiers of the Russians, 2000 infantry, and 4000 cavalry, with 12,000 Austrians led by Colloredo, under his command. On all sides the attack was commenced with the utmost vigour. The enemy's line was turned by the skill and bravery of the Austrians under Count Colloredo, the cavalry charging repeatedly; while upon the other flank, General Milaradowitch, with the Russian Imperial Guard, hussars, and grenadiers, forced successively every position which the enemy attempted to defend. Upon this point above 40 pieces of artillery, 60 tumbrils, and a great quantity of

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baggage fell into the hands of the Russians. Completely beaten in the front of the position, and intercepted in the rear by General Kleist, nothing was left to the enemy but a desperate and precipitate dispersion. Five hundred French horse dashed through the Prussian landwehr up the pass, and actually took possession, for a few minutes, of the whole of Kleist's artillery, but it was immediately recovered by the rapid advance of the Russian and Austrian cavalry."[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Sept. 4, 1813, MS.; Thiers, xvi. 346, 347; Fain, ii. 316, 317.

41. Desperate conflict in the pass in rear.

While this great success was being achieved in the plain in front of Culm, a still more decisive advantage was gained in the pass in rear. The Prussians, seeing the French advancing in good order, and with a firm countenance against them, and knowing that St Cyr and Marmont were on their trace, and the Young Guard directly in their rear on the road to Pirna, deemed themselves surrounded and cut off, and saw no chance of safety but in cutting their way right through the middle of Vandamme's corps, and so regaining the road to Töplitz, at the point of the bayonet. With more reason Vandamme's men deemed themselves cut off, and saw no chance of escape but in cutting their way up the pass through Kleist's men. Thus the two armies, equally desperate, and alike determined to brave all hazards rather than surrender, were precipitated on each other in wild confusion in the ravine; the Prussians tumultuously pouring down, the French as wildly striving up. The defile was so narrow that there was no room to pass each other, and the hostile columns fairly met, breast to breast, knee to knee, each striving with desperate resolution to force the way through the other. A scene of matchless horror ensued in the gorge. Shut in between its rugged banks, thirty thousand men on the two sides, alike brave and desperate, strove to force their way through each other's throng. In the tumult Kleist was seized by the French, but speedily delivered; Vandamme was made prisoner, and finally retained by the Prussians. The broken fragments of his force which finally emerged from

this military chaos, threw away their arms and dispersed, making the best of their way through the woods and over the hills to Peterswalde, where they found shelter under cover of St Cyr's corps. But they arrived in a state of utter disorganisation.* Twelve thousand men in woeful plight, and without their arms, escaped in this manner; 7000, with Vandamme himself and General Haxo, with sixty pieces of cannon, and two eagles, and 300 ammunition-waggons, were taken. The total loss of the French in the two days exceeded 20,000 men, while that of the Allies was under 5000, of whom 3200 fell under Ostermann on the first day. The remains of Vandamme's corps, after this disaster, numbering little above 10,000 men, were placed under Count Lobau's orders.[1]

[1] Lond. 127; Thiers, xvi. 346-348; St Cyr, iv. 389; Bout. 45; Wilson, 43; Jom. iv. 402, 403; Cath. 239.

42. Great moral effect of this victory.

This glorious victory, coming as it did at the very time when decisive successes, as will immediately appear, were gained in other quarters, universally raised the spirits of both the officers and soldiers in the Allied armies, and had a most powerful effect on the future issue of the war. "It has amply compensated," says Sir Charles Stewart, "the failure before Dresden, and, with Blucher's brilliant victory on the Katzbach, renewed all the former enthusiastic hopes of the Allied armies." Nor was its success less conspicuous in restoring concord among them, and removing those heartburnings and jealousies which were beginning to spring up after the disaster before Dresden. The Prince Regent of England now sent the order of the Garter to the Emperor of Russia, as a mark of his high esteem and regard; it was conveyed to his Imperial Majesty by Sir T. Tyrwitt, who suffered not a little difficulty in reaching him, through the execrable roads and marching columns in the mountains.[2] At the same time the Emperor of Austria con-

[2] Lond. 128.

* "Generals Philippon and Duvernet are employed in rallying what remains of their troops; their number, I think, exceeds 10,000. We are furnishing them with cartridges and cannon; indeed, we would put them in a respectable situation, if we could only keep up their spirits."—ST CYR *to* BERTHIER, 31*st August* 1813; ST CYR, iv. 389.

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ferred the order of Maria Theresa on the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia.

1813. 43. Wound and honour of Sir Charles Stewart.

Sir Charles Stewart, who, as usual, was in the front in this battle on the second day, with Colloredo's corps, was severely wounded in the thigh by the bursting of a shell early in the action. He continued in the field, however, till the victory was secured in the evening, when he was conveyed to his tent, fainting from loss of blood. He had been also in the whole battle on the preceding day, alongside of Ostermann, when with the Russian Guards he made so glorious a stand against the forces, then three times superior, of the enemy. His gallantry on both occasions had been so conspicuous, and the services he rendered so important, that the Emperor Alexander soon after, as a special mark of admiration and esteem, sent him the decoration of the fourth class of the order of St George of Russia, which was conferred only for distinguished services in the field. It was accompanied by an autograph letter of his Imperial Majesty, expressed with all the grace and felicity for which he was conspicuous, such as few British subjects have ever received, and which is justly preserved with pride among the many honourable trophies in the archives of the Londonderry family.[1] *

[1] Wilson, ii. 104; Lond. 128.

On the morning of the 30th August, fraught with these

* "TÖPLITZ, 27 *Septembre* 1813.

"M. LE GÉNÉRAL STEWART,—J'ai été témoin comme toute l'armée du zèle indefatigable que vous avez déployé dans cette campagne, où, toujours présent aux champ d'honneur, vous vous êtes fait remarquer dans les endroits les plus exposés par le sang froid et la plus belle valeur.

"Il est de mon devoirs d'honorer d'aussi brillantes qualités, et je crois vous donner une preuve de la justice que je leur rends en vous envoyant les marques de l'ordre de St George de la quatrième classe. Vous savez qu'elles ne s'accordent qu'à la vertu militaire. Elles vous rappeleront le mémorable jour de Culm où votre sang a coulé, et tous les braves qui y ont combattus vous verront avec plaisir porter une décoration qui rappellera que vous avez partagé et leurs gloires et leurs dangers.

"Recevez avec ces témoignages particuliers de mon estime l'assurance de mes sentimens.—ALEXANDRE."

The original of this letter is in the possession of Frances Anne, Marchioness of Londonderry.

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44. Receipt of the disastrous news by Napoleon.

disastrous consequences to Napoleon, he was engaged in studying the map at Dresden, and anticipating the brilliant accounts he every hour expected to receive from Vandamme in regard to his operations in the rear of the Allied army. "At this moment," said he to Berthier, "Marmont and St Cyr must have driven the Austrian rearguard on Töplitz: they will there receive the last ransom of the enemy. We cannot be long of receiving news of Vandamme, and we shall then learn what advantages he has derived from his fine position. It is by him that we shall finish in that quarter. I will leave there some corps of observation, and recall the rest to headquarters; and I calculate that, after the disasters experienced at Dresden, it will take at least three weeks for the army of Schwartzenberg to reorganise itself, and again take the field. It will not require so much time to execute my projected movement on Berlin." Such were Napoleon's views on the morning of a day big with his fate and that of the world. In the afternoon disastrous news began to circulate, at first in whispers, then more openly, as to a great misfortune which had occurred beyond the mountains. It was even said that Vandamme's corps had been destroyed. Soon the arrival of General Corbineau confirmed the intelligence, and from him Napoleon received authentic details of the action, and learned that the Allied sovereigns, so far from returning to Prague dejected and defeated, would make their entry bearing with them the trophies of victory. The Emperor received the intelligence calmly; and turning to Berthier, said, "To a flying enemy you must either offer a bridge of gold or oppose a barrier of steel; Vandamme, it would appear, could not oppose that barrier of steel. Can we have written anything which inspired him with that fatal idea of descending into Bohemia? Fain, look over the order-book."[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 320, 321.

"No one," says Dr Johnson, "ever rose from an ordinary situation in life to high destinies, without great and commanding qualities in his mind being blended with

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45. Napoleon's false charges against Vandamme for disobedience of orders.

meannesses which would be inconceivable in private life." Napoleon was a remarkable example of this singular but just observation. He made it an invariable rule never to admit he had judged wrong in anything, and, with whatever injustice, to lay the blame of every disaster which occurred on others rather than bear any part of it himself. Understanding, according to the first account, that Vandamme was killed, he immediately began laying the whole blame on that ill-fated officer. He positively maintained, verbally as well as in writing, that he had given him positive orders to intrench himself on the summit of the mountains, and not engulf himself at their feet.* This was *entirely false*; so far from having given Vandamme any such order, he had enjoined upon him directly the reverse—namely, to march direct on Töplitz, at their feet, where he would cover himself with glory, and find his marshal's baton.† Nay, on the very day on which the disaster occurred, Napoleon, so far from being ignorant of what Vandamme was doing, had written to St Cyr a letter, in which he recounted with satisfaction the successes gained by Vandamme the day before *in the plain close to Culm* over Ostermann.‡ Napoleon's attempt, there-

* "This unhappy Vandamme, who seems to have been killed, had not left a single sentinel upon the mountains, nor a reserve in any quarter; he engulfed himself in a hollow, without feeling his way in any manner. If he had only left four battalions and four pieces of cannon on the heights in rear, this disaster would not have occurred. I had given him positive orders to intrench himself on the heights, and encamp his corps there, and send down into Bohemia nothing but parties to disquiet the enemy and obtain news."—NAPOLEON *to* ST CYR, *September* 1, 1813; ST CYR, iv. 392.

† "March direct to Töplitz; you will cover yourself with glory. Do not let yourself be imposed on by a rabble of fugitives."—BERTHIER *to* VANDAMME, *August* 29, 1813. "Aujourd'hui 29, à six heures du matin, le Général Vandamme a attaqué le Prince de Würtemberg près de Hollendorf; il lui a fait 1500 prisonniers, pris quatre pièces de canon, et l'a mené battant; c'étaient *tous Russes*. Le Général Vandamme marchait sur Töplitz avec tout son corps. Le Général Prince de Reuss, qui commandait une de nos brigades, a été tué. Je vous écris cela pour votre gouverne. Le Général Vandamme me mande que l'épouvante est dans toute l'armée Russe."—NAPOLEON *au* ROI DE NAPLES, 29 *Août* 1813; THIERS, xvi. 356, 357.

‡ "I have received your letter of the 6th from Reinhard Grimme, in which you describe your position behind the 6th corps [Marmont's]. The intention of his Majesty is that you support the 6th corps; but it is desirable that you

fore, to throw the blame of the disaster on a brave soldier whom he imagined to be dead, is founded on an entire fabrication; but fortunately for the cause of truth and justice, his letters remain to convict him of a far more serious offence than a military error—viz., the coining a deliberate falsehood to relieve himself, by charging a misfortune of his own creation on the head of a gallant lieutenant, forced to incur it, whom he believed at the time to be no more.*

46. Great error here committed by Napoleon.

In truth, this military error was one of the gravest kind, and was attended with the most disastrous effect on his future fortunes. He sent Vandamme forward with a force which did not exceed, at the very utmost, 40,000 men, directly into the rear of the Allied army, 100,000 strong, who were forced to fall upon him with the energy of despair in order to effect their retreat into Bohemia. He did this, too, when he had the Young Guard, 30,000 strong, only nine leagues in the rear, which he halted when within reach of decisive success, and allowed to remain inactive at Pirna. Even worse than this, he had committed what Marmont justly calls the "*inconceivable fault*" of not having informed Vandamme that the Young Guard had been halted, and still leaving him under orders to advance alone and unsupported to Töplitz. Napoleon himself admitted, contrary to his usual practice, to St Cyr a few days

should select for that purpose a road to the left, between the Duke of Ragusa and the corps of General Vandamme, who has obtained great successes over the enemy, and made 2000 prisoners."—BERTHIER *to* ST CYR, *August* 30, 1813; ST CYR, iv. 388.

* "On ne savait pas ce qu'étaient devenus Haxo et Vandamme: on allait jusqu'à les croire morts l'une et l'autre. Le secrétaire du Général Vandamme ayant reparu, Napoléon fit saisir les papiers du Général pour en extraire sa correspondance militaire, *et enlever la preuve des ordres envoyés à cet infortuné.* Napoleon eut même la faiblesse de nier l'ordre donné de s'avancer sur Töplitz, et sans toutefois accabler Vandamme, en le plaignant au contraire, il écrivit à tous les chefs de corps que ce général avait reçu pour instruction de s'arrêter sur les hauteurs de Culm, mais qu'entraîné par trop d'ardeur, il s'était engagé en plaine, et s'était perdu par excès de zèle. Le récit authentique que nous avons présenté prouve la fausseté de ces assertions, imaginées pour conserver à Napoléon une autorité sur les esprits, dont il avait en ce moment besoin plus que jamais."—THIERS, xvi. 400, 401.

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after, that he had committed a great fault, and missed the opportunity of striking a decisive blow, by halting the Young Guard at Pirna on the 28th.* Had he not done so, that formidable body of veterans would have come on the field in the very middle of the battle on the 30th, directly in the rear of the Prussians, and the fate which befell Vandamme would have been that of Kleist. What would have been the fate of the Allied army, if, when descending in confusion and disorder the passes of the Boehmerwald they had found the Young Guard and Vandamme, 70,000 strong, flushed with victory, prepared to stop their progress in front of Töplitz? Then was the crisis of Napoleon's fortunes. Disaster great and irreparable would have befallen the Allied armies, and the consequent disunion of their councils would have led to a peace glorious to France, and destructive to the liberties of Europe.†

In truth, the error committed by Napoleon on this oc-

* "The Emperor admitted to me, in conversation on the 7th September, that if he had not halted his Guard at Pirna on the 28th, but, on the contrary, followed it up on the traces of Vandamme, he would have found a great opportunity of striking a blow in the neighbourhood of Töplitz."—ST CYR, iv. 137, 138.

† Three of the ablest military historians of France, who were all actively engaged in these very operations, concur in admitting the grave fault committed by Napoleon. St Cyr says: "On the 29th, in the evening, the Emperor must have known that Vandamme had fought the whole day, not only against Ostermann, but the forces which Barclay had brought up to his support. He had, therefore, the whole of that night to make his dispositions, which a man such as he could easily have done in an hour; and if he had conceived the position of Vandamme hazardous, as unquestionably it was, he had time to draw his corps back, or support it by his Guard. The latter corps could have marched to Nollendorf or Peterswalde in a few hours; that is, before Kleist's Prussians, who were encamped on the night of the 29th at Fürstenwalde, had come up." —ST CYR, iv. 129.

Jomini says: "Vandamme's defeat was a double misfortune; for it was to be ascribed to an evident oblivion of the first principles of war, which prescribe the pursuit to extremity of a beaten enemy. Napoleon should unquestionably have pursued, *à l'outrance*, the defeated army of the Allied sovereigns. There was the vital point of the war; all the rest was merely secondary, and could have been repaired. There also was the greatest chance of disorder from the number of chiefs who commanded the different corps. If he had quitted Pirna to fly to the relief of Macdonald, routed on the Katzbach, the proceeding would have been at least intelligible, but he did not then know of it; and his return to Dresden from Pirna, having no other object but to prepare the march upon Berlin, was one of the greatest faults of his whole career. Independent of its

47. Simultaneous movement of Oudinot on Berlin. Aug. 20.

casion was so enormous, and so much at variance with the usual ability and foresight of his military operations, that it would be altogether inconceivable were it not explained by another principle, not less conspicuous than military talent in his character, which was an overbearing disposition and self-confidence which led him to brook no delay, and venture upon everything at once. In pursuance of this strongly-marked and irresistible propensity, not content with the defeat and ruin of the Allied Grand Army, which was in a manner within his power, *he resolved on a simultaneous attack on Berlin.* He thought a great impression would be produced in Europe, and the *prestige* of his power effectually restored, if, at the same time that he himself defeated and drove back the Allied Grand Army, one of his lieutenants routed the army of the Crown Prince, and damped the zeal of the Prussians by the capture of their capital in the very outset of the campaign. Impressed with these ideas, he sent the most positive orders to Oudinot, who commanded the army destined to act against Berlin, to commence operations the moment the armistice expired; and it was to clear his right flank from disquietude while this important blow was in course of being struck, that he made the movement in person against

cutting short the fruits of victory, it became the principal cause of Vandamme's defeat."—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoléon*, iv. 403, 404.

Marshal Marmont says: "Napoléon, après avoir mis en route sa Garde, était resté à Dresde incertain sur ce qu'il ferait. Ayant reçu les nouvelles de l'échec éprouvé par Maréchal Oudinot devant Berlin et des revers du Maréchal Macdonald sur la Katzbach, il resolut de rester, de rappeler sa Garde, et il eut le tort incroyable de ne pas faire prévenir Vandamme. Si la Garde eut suivi Vandamme, Kleist, pris entre St Cyr et la Garde, mettait bas les armes, et Vandamme eut battu le 30 les divers corps qui l'ont attaqué. Mais bien plus si la Garde eut joint Vandamme le 29, pendant qu'il était victorieux, il aurait pu se porter en avant, et se trouver ainsi au milieu de toutes les forces ennemies, qui étaient sans organisation et dans une entière confusion par suite des difficultés de la retraite. Toute l'artillerie marchait isolement, ses troupes descendaient par détachements en suivant tous les sentiers praticable. Il n'y avait pas le 29, 30,000 hommes à mettre regulièrement en bataille dans la plaine. C'était un de ces coups de fortune comme il en arrive en un siècle de guerre. Tout le matériel aurait été pris, et tout se serait dispersé. Des reproches reciproques auraient servi à tout dissoudre à tout désorganiser. La fortune en a ordonné autrement, mais le seul coupable et le veritable auteur de la catastrophe c'est Napoléon."—MARMONT, v. 165, 167.

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Blucher, which was interrupted by the Allied advance upon Dresden. But in directing this invasion of Prussia, the French Emperor entirely miscalculated the resistance the invading army was likely to experience from the enthusiastic spirit and patriotic devotion of the Prussian people. He reckoned on Bernadotte having only 85,000 men under his orders, including those under Walmoden, watching Davoust in Hamburg, which would have left him not more than 60,000 to cover Berlin. But instead of this, the Crown Prince had 80,000 men under his immediate command, including 20,000 excellent cavalry, independent of the troops observing Hamburg and blockading the fortresses on the Oder. Oudinot had not more than 70,000 men with him; and although a large part of the Allied force was landwehr and new levies, which could hardly be relied on under a heavy fire, yet a large part of the French army was composed of conscripts just as inexperienced, and by no means equally animated by patriotic or enthusiastic feeling.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 380, 581; Bernadotte's Official Report; Schoell, i. 73; Jom. iv. 406; Bout. 52, 53.

48. Battle of Gross Beeren. Aug. 23.

Bernadotte, who was quite sincere with the Allies up to a certain point—namely, to effect the expulsion of the French from Germany, though with as little interference of the Swedish troops as possible—took his measures with great judgment to resist the enemy and cover the Prussian capital. On the 17th August, in expectation of an immediate attack, he assembled his forces at Ruhlsdorf, in front of Berlin, in a good position, and there awaited the attack of the enemy. The concentration of so large a body of men, however, was the work of time; and before it was completely effected, the French were upon him, and gained considerable successes in the outset. But everything was soon supplied by the ardour and enthusiasm of the Prussians. Oudinot, who directed his march from Baruth by Luckenwalde, attacked on the 23d. Bertrand, with the French right, in vain assailed Blankenfelde, but Reynier with their centre won Gross Beeren. Bulow, however, who had a corps of nearly 30,000 men under

his orders, without waiting for orders from Bernadotte, of whose loyalty he had strong suspicions, countermarched from the left to the centre, and fell on Reynier, whose 18,000 men, at Gross Beeren, were established in the very heart of the Allied line, and totally defeated him, with the loss of 13 guns and 2000 prisoners. The arrival of Oudinot's own corps from the French left alone averted an utter rout. The total loss of the French in this battle exceeded 10,000 men.* After this check, which taught him the quality of the troops with which he had to deal, Oudinot drew back, under the cannon of Wittenberg; and this induced a still greater disaster, for 10,000 Saxons and Bavarians in his army, ill-affected to the French cause, disbanded and fled to the Elbe, exclaiming "*Sauve qui peut.*" Great part of them never rejoined their colours, but entered the patriot ranks of Germany; and the whole Saxon prisoners in Berlin, in the enthusiasm excited by this success, enlisted in the same ardent bands.[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Sept. 10, 1813, MS.; Thiers, xvi. 387-391; Bernadotte's Official Report; Schoell, i. 73.

49. Real cause of this fatal dispersion of forces.

Thus terminated Napoleon's boasted march to Berlin, which was to have entirely reinstated his affairs, punished Bernadotte for his defection, and turned the patriotic songs of the Prussians into lamentation and mourning. So set was the French Emperor upon this achievement, that he sacrificed to it the whole fortunes of the campaign. The first question which he asked when he returned to Dresden on the 26th was, "Whether there was any news from Berlin?" and it was for the same object that he halted the Young Guard at Pirna on the 28th, and returned himself to Berlin, when, by simply moving it on in support of Vandamme, he would have completed the ruin of the Allied Grand Army, and terminated the war by

* "Une douzaine de mille hommes étaient les uns morts ou blessés sur le champ de bataille de Gross Beeren, les autres dispersés sur les routes dans un état de complete débandade. . . . . C'est tout au plus si les trois corps d'armée, la cavalerie du Duc de Padoue comprise, présentaient en ligne 52,000 hommes, au lieu des 64,000, qu'ils comptaient à la reprise des hostilités."—THIERS, xvi. 421, 422.

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a thunderbolt like Austerlitz or Friedland. His conduct in not doing so, and thus foregoing the greatest opportunity of his life, was a part of the same character which led him to engage *simultaneously* in the invasion of Andalusia and Portugal in 1810—which made him leave Portugal to attack Valentia when Wellington was threatening Leon in 1812, which occasioned the loss of Spain—and to invade Russia when the devouring cancer of the Peninsular war was still unhealed, which led to the loss of the French empire.

50. Advances of Macdonald against Blucher.

While these important events were in progress in Bohemia and Prussia, a disaster of a still more stunning character was incurred on the banks of the Katzbach. Napoleon was nowise answerable for this calamity, for the instructions which he had left to Marshal Macdonald, when he left the army to go to Dresden, were of the most sensible description.* The force under the immediate command of Macdonald amounted to 75,000 men, forming the corps of that marshal himself, Ney, and Lauriston, besides 12,000 men under Poniatowski, stationed in communication with him at Zittau, on the Bohemian frontier, to guard the defile by that place into Bohemia, whither Napoleon at that time intended to turn his steps. The Emperor never doubted that with this force he would be able to accomplish the task assigned to him, which was to throw back Blucher beyond the Jauer, and to establish himself in strength on the Bober, between Buntzlau and Lowenberg, in such a manner as to keep the army of Silesia removed from Dresden, and prevent it from making detachments to assail Oudinot in his movement on Berlin. Macdonald seems to have been of the same

* They were: "To concentrate his troops and march towards the enemy, so as to be in a situation to afford aid to the Grand Army in its operations against Dresden or Bohemia; but, if attacked by superior forces, to retire behind the Queiss and hold Görlitz; and if hard pressed when the Emperor was far advanced in his attack by Zittau upon Prague, to retire to the intrenched camp around Dresden: keeping in view that his principal object should be to keep up his communication with the Emperor."—NAPOLEON'S *Instructions to* MACDONALD, *August* 28, 1813; VAUDONCOURT, i. 145.

opinion as to his strength to throw back the enemy, but in so doing he exposed himself unnecessarily to hazard. Instead of obeying his orders, which were to keep his troops as much as possible concentrated, he divided them, for the sake of convenience in marching and getting supplies, into *five columns*, which advanced on parallel roads over a front twenty-four miles in breadth, stretching from Schönau to Liegnitz. The centre of this straggling army, under Macdonald in person, advanced by the Wüthende-Neisse on Weinberg; the right, under Lauriston, moved on Hennersdorf, with Puthod's division, detached by Schönau and the foot of the Bohemian mountains; while the left, led by Souham, in the absence of Ney, who had been taken with him by the Emperor to Dresden, was ordered to move by Liegnitz, pass the KATZBACH there, and fall on the right of the enemy; and Sebastiani's cavalry connected Souham with the centre.[1] Thiers, xvi. 367-369; Vaud. i. 146; Jom. iv. 373-416.

51. Blucher's simultaneous advance against him. Aug. 24.

Blucher, who had 75,000 admirable troops well in hand, and in great part concentrated in front of Jauer, was not the man to let so favourable an opportunity of striking a decisive blow against the enemy escape him, and fortune singularly favoured his designs. No sooner did he receive information that the Guards and cuirassiers had returned towards Dresden, than, rightly judging that the Emperor himself was with them, he resolved, in conformity with the plan of operations concerted at Trachenberg, to resume the offensive at all points. He directed his three corps to halt in their retreat and recross the Katzbach in three columns between Goldberg and Liegnitz,—York and Sacken on his right moving against Liegnitz; Langeron on the left towards Goldberg. On learning the near approach of the French, the veteran Prussian, who, with York and Sacken's corps, was now close to the ravine of the Neisse, arrested their march on his own side of the plateau of Eichholz, behind a low range of swelling heights, which effectually screened them from observation, and there, like a lion in cover, lay crouching

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for his spring. A heavy rain and thick mist, which continued the whole day, and was as favourable to the Allies here as it was adverse at Dresden, eminently favoured his designs by entirely shutting out his troops from view. The wished-for opportunity was not long of arriving. A part of Macdonald's men had crossed the Wüthende-Neisse, between Weinberg and Klein Tintz, when Blucher, seeing that it would be long before a sufficient number could pass over in support, gave the signal for attack. Wassilchikoff, with the whole Russian cavalry of Sacken's corps, fell on a large body of Sebastiani's horse, who had crossed and covered Macdonald's left, while the Cossacks stole round unperceived and assailed their rear. Both attacks proved successful. The French cavalry were speedily overthrown, and thrust back into the defile, already choked up with guns, carriages, and men; while the Allied foot, now joining the victorious horse, threw themselves upon the infantry of Macdonald's corps. Charpentier's division was soon hurled down the rocky banks into the roaring Neisse (Wüthende-Neisse). Many were made prisoners, twenty-six guns were taken, and all the ammunition-waggons lost.[1]

[1] Plotho, ii. 89, 90; Sacken's Official Account; Schoell, iii. 80, 81; Kausler, 639, 640; Thiers, xvi. 370-373.

52. Defeat of Macdonald with immense loss.

Souham, who was marching on the French left towards Liegnitz, hearing the roar of the battle on his right, turned, with the instinct of a brave man, in that direction, and arrived with his leading division at the entrance of the defile of Nieder Crain just as the French horse were overthrown on the plateau opposite. He immediately united his men to the reserve of Sebastiani and entered the defile. This only made matters worse. His infantry, with Sebastiani's reserve cuirassiers, got through the ravine, and were mounting the opposite side in tolerable order, when, just as they reached the summit and were beginning to deploy, they met the fugitives. In vain they endeavoured to make openings and let them through; the refluent mass broke down and swept away every attempt at formation.[2] Souham's columns, striving to gain

[2] Sacken's Official Account; Schoell, iii. 81; Thiers, xvi. 372, 373; Grosse Chron. i. 482-490.

a passage, were for the most part fairly overwhelmed by the torrent. Such as succeeded in reaching the crest were charged by the Allied cavalry and driven down the steep. Two remaining divisions of his corps, which came up at nine at night, and crossed over lower down the Katzbach, to endeavour to restore the combat, were met by Sacken and forced back across the ford.

53. Retreat and immense losses of the French.

While this disaster was experienced in the French centre and left, an obstinate conflict had been maintained on the right, between Lauriston and Langeron, towards Hennersdorf. The numbers there were about equal; and both sides stood their ground with resolution. Towards evening Macdonald, having learned the extent of the disaster on his left, gave orders to Lauriston to retreat; this was effected in good order, and with comparatively little loss, though it amounted, when he regained the opposite banks of the Katzbach, to twenty-two guns, his whole ammunition-waggons, and 2000 prisoners. A serious disaster, however, befell Puthod's division, detached, as mentioned above, from Lauriston's corps, in the course of the retreat on the following day. On arriving at the banks of the Bober, he found the whole bridges swept away by the extreme violence of the floods which descended from the Bohemian hills, in consequence of the storm of rain on the preceding day. In vain he tried, by moving down the stream, to find a passage at some practicable point. In this situation he was speedily surrounded by the victorious divisions of the Russians; and after a stout resistance, his soldiers, grown desperate, broke, and fled to the banks of the river to endeavour to save themselves by swimming. Part escaped in this manner; but 3000 men, two eagles, and twelve guns, with their whole ammunition-waggons, were taken, besides 2000 killed or drowned in the attempt to cross the river.[1] In the course of the day forty more guns were taken, making, in all, 103 guns and 230 caissons captured

Nov. 27.

[1] Thiers, xvi. 374-377; Vaud. i. 148; Jom. iv. 19; Grosse Chron. i. 503; Langeron's Official Account; Schoell, ii. 83, 84.

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during the battle and pursuit, besides 18,000 prisoners and 7000 killed and wounded.[1] *

1813. 54. Effect of these disasters on Napoleon.

Such was the terrible disaster of the Katzbach. This succession of unexpected misfortunes following each other in rapid succession, made the greatest impression on the ardent and impassioned soul of Napoleon. For several days he remained silent, moody, and contemplative, revolving in his capacious mind the chances of the campaign, and weighing the different degrees of culpability which he could impute to his lieutenants. In truth, the disasters incurred were so numerous and irreparable, that it is not surprising he almost despaired of his fortunes. Four great battles had been fought in the short space of a single fortnight, in the first only of which he had been victorious, while in the three last he had been defeated with tremendous loss. In that short time he had lost 80,000 men and 200 guns, while the Allies, on the field at least, at the very utmost, had not been weakened by half the number. Worse still, the prestige of victory had passed over to the other side. The successes of the Allies had been the last in this fearful strife; their gallant bands had returned flushed with victory to Prague and Berlin; all Germany had come to ring with their songs of triumph. Indescribable was the enthusiasm which these circumstances produced in the whole of Europe, but especially in the Fatherland; they at one blow doubled the strength of the Allied armies. Napoleon, as usual, cast all the responsibility on his generals. It was their incapacity and blunders which had done the whole, and converted a commenced triumph into a long series of disasters.† He was in an especial manner incensed, and not without

* "Le 30 on se trouva tous réunis sur la gauche du Bober, mais au nombre de 50,000 hommes au plus, au lieu de 70,000 qu'on était quelques jours auparavant, et après avoir laissé 100 pièces de canon dans les fanges. . . . Macdonald se vit donc sur le Bober, avec 50,000 soldats découragés, et 9000 ou 10,000 traînards suivant l'armée, et alléguant le défaut de fusils pour ne pas revenir au drapeau."—THIERS, xvi. 377.

† "Mon cousin,—M. le Duc de Tarente (Macdonald) s'est laissé pousser sur Görlitz. Il sera possible que je sois obligé de marcher sur Bautzen demain

reason, at Oudinot, for the senseless dispersion of force which had led to the check at Gross Beeren, and the eccentric subsequent retreat to Wittenberg instead of Torgau, which put in hazard the important interior line of communication between the Grand Army and that of the North, and endangered those of Macdonald. If an error was committed by the French marshal on this occasion, it led to no evil results. Bernadotte, whose dark and tortuous policy was now renewed in consequence of the extrication of Berlin from immediate danger, was so dilatory in his movements after his victory, that on the 4th September, eleven days after, he had only advanced to Rabenstein, near the Elbe, a distance of little mere than fifty miles from the field of battle.[1]

[1] Plotho, ii. 154, 155; Vaud. i.168; Bout. 57-59; Jom. iv.408; St Cyr, iv. 130.

55. Causes of Napoleon's early success and late disasters.

It was already evident, from the turn which events had taken, both that Napoleon had judged wisely in making his stand on the Elbe, and establishing himself in such strength on that river; and that he had, even in so short a time as had since intervened, lost all the advantages with which his position there was attended, and rendered his situation eminently perilous, by his grasping and overbearing disposition having led him to aim at impossibilities, and undertake everything at once. The advantage of the position and wisdom of selecting it as the central point and base of his operations, had been decisively proved by the fact that, by rendering him master of an interior line of communication, and enabling him to fall with a preponderating force upon any one part of the

ou après demain. Occupez donc promptement les positions défensives." —NAPOLEON *to* ST CYR, 1*st September* 1813; ST CYR, iv. 391.

"Mon cousin,—Ecrivez au Prince de la Moskwa (Ney). Nous venons de recevoir des nouvelles du Duc de Reggio (Oudinot), qui a jugé convenable de venir se mettre, à deux marches, audessus de Wittenberg. Le résultat de ce mouvement intempestif est, que le corps du Général Tauenzein, et un fort parti des Cosaques, se sont portés du côté de Luckau et de Bautzen, et inquiétent les communications du Duc de Tarente. Il est vraiement difficile d'avoir moins de tête que le Duc de Reggio. Il n'a point su aborder l'ennemi; et il a eu l'art de faire donner un de ses corps séparément. S'il l'eut abordé franchement, il l'aurait partout culbuté."—NAPOLEON *to* BERTHIER, 2*d September* 1813; ST CYR, iv. 393; and JOMINI, iv. 417, 418.

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circle of his enemies, it had given him the victory over their Grand Army and most formidable attack. Nothing was wanting to complete his success but to follow up the great blow then struck, and, by completing the ruin of the Grand Army, dissolve the Coalition formed against him. Nothing would have been easier than to have done this; all that was required was to have moved the Young Guard, Poniatowski's corps, and Vandamme, forming a mass of 75,000 combatants, upon Culm and Töplitz, to stop the Grand Army in its retreat, while Murat, Victor, St Cyr, and Marmont pressed their retiring columns.* Instead of this, he adopted the fatal resolution, impelled by his towering disposition and overweening ambition, of *striking on three sides at once.* He enforced a vigorous offensive on Oudinot against Berlin; Macdonald took the same course against Blucher; while he himself was launching his victorious legions on the rear of the Grand Army. But his forces, great as they were, could not suffice for the *triple strain*, and the consequence was that he thought it necessary to halt the Young Guard at Pirna, in order to be in a situation to support, if required, Oudinot in his advance on Berlin, or Macdonald in his march upon Liegnitz. The result was that his weighty central reserve, perfectly adequate to have turned the scale in any of the three expeditions, remained inactive while they were simultaneously going on, and disaster, great and irreparable, was incurred at once in Bohemia, Prussia, and Silesia, in consequence of its want. There was here a decided deviation from military principles, not in selecting the Elbe as the basis of his defensive warfare, as Sir George Cathcart argues, but in neglecting to make the

* "At Culm," says Wilson, "each party fought with a resolution suitable to the magnitude of its object—the preservation or ruin of the Allied army (ii. 251). The danger seemed imminent, for the whole army still remained fixed in the mountains, unable to move from the breaking down of carriages and other impediments. The distance from Kraupen to their embouchure was but five wersts, and *if that pass was gained, ruin was inevitable for above* 150,000 *men*" (ii. 101).

proper use of it, by confining himself to *one* offensive at a time, and by an undue dispersion of his force when the contest commenced.

So set was Napoleon upon prosecuting his attack on Berlin, that his first idea, even after all the disasters which he had sustained, was to reinforce his army there by his Guards and reserves, and march in person at their head against that hated capital. Nothing diverted him from this design but the advices he received of the extent of the losses sustained by Macdonald on the Katzbach, which proved to be so serious that he felt himself compelled, much against his will, to direct his steps with the reserves towards Bautzen and the banks of the Bober. Contenting himself, therefore, with reinforcing the Army of the North, and putting it under the command of Ney, whose instructions were to push on and occupy the Prussian capital at all hazards, he himself set out with his Guards and cuirassiers, to whom were added Poniatowski's corps, which was brought up from Zittau for that purpose. The united force formed a mass of 60,000 fresh troops, all in the finest order, and little weakened by the fatigues of the campaign, and raised Macdonald's army to 110,000 men. At the same time, Marmont's corps was withdrawn from the pursuit of the Allied Grand Army, which had retired into Bohemia, and was not in a condition for some time to renew operations, and stationed at Hoyerswerda, midway between the armies of Ney and Macdonald, to keep up the interior communications of the Grand Army. This was the more necessary that a body of Cossacks, detached from Bernadotte's force, had pushed forward and captured a considerable convoy of ammunition between Bautzen and Bischofswerda, in the very centre of the French position. Sixty thousand men, under St Cyr, Victor, Lobau, and Murat, were left in observation of the Allied Grand Army of Bohemia, and 60,000 under Ney, directed against Berlin.[1] Thus, notwithstanding all the losses and fatigues of the campaign, and after providing for all the garrisons, the three armies

56. Napoleon's march to support Macdonald.

Sept. 2.

[1] Napoleon to St Cyr, Sept. 3, 1813; St Cyr, iv. 395; Fain, ii. 325, 326; Thiers, xvi. 402-407; Napoleon to Marmont, Sept. 3, 1813; Marm. v. 232, 233.

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which combated in a circle round Dresden still presented a force of 250,000 effective men to make head against the enemy. At the same time, the works around were strengthened, and everything arranged for the rapid concentration of the troops at any menaced point.

57. Blucher falls back, and Napoleon returns to Dresden.

The better to keep Blucher ignorant of the formidable attack with which he was menaced, Napoleon took the utmost pains to conceal his departure from Dresden, and gave out that his real destination was the Army of the North, with a view to a movement on Berlin. He himself set out at an early hour on the 4th September, and took the road to Bautzen with the greatest secrecy. But although everything was done to elude observation, the real destination of the Emperor could not long be concealed. The Guards and cuirassiers moving towards the Bober, left no doubt of the route which the Emperor had taken. He was in great hopes that Blucher, who was following up his victory with the utmost vigour, would either be in ignorance of his approach, or be so intoxicated with the triumph really gained over Macdonald as to hazard a general battle, in which case he felt assured of a decisive victory. But he found himself mistaken. Faithful to the plan of the campaign agreed to at Trachenberg and the orders he had received, Blucher no sooner heard of the Guards being seen in the enemy's ranks than he gave orders to halt, and fall back at all points. Görlitz was soon abandoned, and reoccupied by the French on the night of the 5th. On the following morning the pursuit was resumed with the utmost vigour. But Blucher still continued to retreat, and his columns at all points were seen retiring on the verge of the horizon. At the same time, alarming advices were received from Dresden, against which the Allied Grand Army was again advancing in great strength under Schwartzenberg in person.[1] Stunned with these repeated disasters, the Emperor, after musing long on the probable issue of a campaign in which the Allies gave

[1] Odel. i. 269; Bout. 79-81; Fain, ii. 326; Thiers, xvi. 510, 511; Marm. v. 254; Napoleon to Marmont, Sept. 6, 1813, Ibid.

him no opportunity of striking a blow in person, and the arms of his lieutenants at a distance had become uniformly unfortunate, determined to abandon the pursuit, ordered the Guards and cuirassiers to return with himself to Dresden, and left orders with Marmont to remain at Hoyerswerda in a situation which kept up the communications between Ney and Macdonald, and was at hand to lend assistance to whichever might be attacked by superior forces.

58. Advance of Ney against Bernadotte. Sept. 5.

The return of the Emperor to the Saxon capital was loudly called for by the events which had occurred since his departure, and ere long affairs towards Berlin assumed the most alarming aspect. Ney, who had been appointed to the Army of the North in lieu of Oudinot, after the defeat of Gross Beeren, received on 2d September the most positive instructions from the Emperor to push on to Berlin, while the Grand Army of Bohemia was not in a condition as yet to resume offensive operations.* He found Oudinot's army not more than 60,000 strong, sheltered under the walls of Wittenberg, in very bad condition, discouraged, and in a great part broken up, having lost altogether its communications with Dresden, and surrounded on all sides by clouds of light horse, which seriously interrupted its supplies. On the 5th he commenced his movement, directing his steps in the first instance towards Baruth, on the Torgau road, from whence he was to advance direct on Berlin. No sooner did Bernadotte receive information that the French army was in motion, than he concentrated his troops, and prepared to intercept its progress.[1] Tauenzein, with the advanced-guard, reached DENNEWITZ early on the morn-

[1] Richter, i. 437; Vaud. i. 171; Bout. 62; Marm. v. 250, 251; Thiers, xvi. 422, 423.

* "At Baruth you will be only three days' march from Berlin. The communication with the Emperor will then be completely re-established, and the attack on the Prussian capital may take place on the 9th or 10th inst. All that cloud of Cossacks and rabble of landwehr infantry will fall back on all sides when once your march is decidedly taken. You will perceive the necessity of moving rapidly, in order to take advantage of the present state of inefficiency of the Allied Grand Army in Bohemia, which might otherwise recommence operations the moment they become aware of the instructions of the Emperor."—*Instructions to* NEY, *2d September* 1813; ST CYR, iv. 394.

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ing of the 6th, and soon beheld the head of the French army, which, in its march towards Baruth, was approaching his post with an evident intention of making good the passage through to Jüterbock by main force.

59. Battle of Dennewitz. Sept. 6.

Had Ney been master of his own measures he would not have hazarded an attack on an enemy strongly posted, superior in numbers, and enthusiastic in spirit. But the commands of the Emperor to advance were peremptory, and he was too well aware of his imperious disposition to disobey. Tauenzein's troops barred the way in battle array, and the heavy fire of their artillery soon brought up Bertrand's Italian division, but Morand's French veterans of the same corps re-established the action, and, quickly gaining ground, threatened the Allies with total defeat. Bulow, however, whose corps was following that of Tauenzein, no sooner heard the cannonade, than, without any order from his commander-in-chief, he moved up his 20,000 Prussians and attacked the left flank of Bertrand and Morand's men, as they were pushing Tauenzein before them towards Dennewitz. On the other side, Reynier with his Saxons came up on the menaced flank to the assistance of Morand and Bertrand, and a furious conflict ensued between them. At length, however, the Prussians prevailed, Reynier was driven back, and the French left and left centre driven through Göhlsdorf in the direction of Oehna.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 421, 422; Vaud. i. 172; Jom. iv. 421; Marm. v. 251, 252.

60. Decisive victory of the Allies.

Ney, however, was not the man to yield the victory while a chance remained. No sooner did he perceive the ultimate success of Bulow on the Allied right, than he hastened up Oudinot's corps to the assistance of the retiring Saxons. This large reinforcement restored the combat, and it was hard to say to which side victory would ultimately incline, when the Prussian brigade of Borstel, which was marching in the rear, hearing the loud cannonade towards Jüterbock, suddenly appeared on the field, and, on the extreme Allied right, with loud cheers attacked Oudinot and the Saxons in flank. At this

instant, Thumen's Prussian division having assailed Bertrand's corps, and forced it out of Dennewitz to a considerable distance from the field of battle, Ney had ordered Oudinot to quit the Saxons and hurry to the centre to his (Bertrand's) support, so as to prevent the French wings from being separated from each other. This left the Saxons alone exposed to Borstel's eager rush. They quickly fell into confusion, abandoned Göhlsdorf, which hey had retaken, and began to disband over the plain. At this moment, when 45,000 Prussians, alone and unsupported, had hitherto maintained the contest, Bernadotte, with the Swedes and Russians, 25,000 strong, the former in the rear, who had broken up that morning from Eckmannsdorf, reached the field, and, rapidly forming his troops in order of battle, advanced in the finest order to their support. This great reinforcement to the Allies was decisive of the day. Ney, who with difficulty kept his ground when the Prussians alone were in the field, was in no condition to withstand this fresh attack. He was forced to retire, which he did at first in fair order, but gradually the centre, attenuated by Bertrand's eccentric retreat to the right, was thrown into confusion. The disbanded Saxons came rushing into the gap to get behind the shelter of Oudinot's men, and the field was speedily covered with fugitives. Ney did all he could, but it was in vain; the two wings were irrevocably separated: and it was only owing to the inexplicable tardiness of Bernadotte's pursuit that he was enabled to reunite them, two days after, beneath the ramparts of Torgau. In the battle and retreat, the French lost 18,000 men, of whom one half were deserters who never again rejoined their colours, with 23 guns and 17 caissons. The Allies were weakened by 6000 men, of whom 5000 were Prussians—a clear proof with whom the glory of the contest rested.[1] So disconcerned was Ney with the issue of this battle, that he wrote to Napoleon next day resigning his command, accompanied by expressions

[1] Lond. 130; Thiers, xvi. 430-432; Marm. v. 252, 253; Bernadotte's Official Account; Schoell, iii. 117; Richter, i. 445, 446; Vaud. i. 173; Wilson, ii. 107.

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proving he deemed success impossible with the troops put under his orders, but the Emperor declined to receive his resignation. *

61. Alarming position of the French army.

Thus, on all sides, the fabric of Napoleon's power in Germany was crumbling into dust, and it had become painfully evident that a decisive change had taken place in the relative position of the contending parties. Under the eye of the Emperor, indeed, the Guards and cuirassiers, the *élite* of the army, combated with their former resolution, and had achieved deeds worthy of their ancient fame, but in every other situation the French troops had been defeated, and with consequences which rendered those defeats doubly disastrous. Thirty thousand prisoners and 250 guns had been taken by the Allies in the last three weeks, and the total losses of the French in that short period amounted to 100,000. This presented a striking contrast to the Russians in the Moscow campaign, who had retreated from the Niemen to Moscow, a distance of 600 miles, without one gun being taken, or one battalion broken, though pursued by 400,000 men. The young conscripts and newly raised regiments had in many cases behaved very badly in the field, and on the first reverse threw away their arms, dispersed, and were seen no more. The troops of the Confederation of the Rhine in particular, though they in

* "C'est un devoir pour moi de déclarer à V. A. S. qu'il est impossible de tirer un bon parti des 4e, 7e, et 12e corps d'armée dans l'état actuel de leur organisation. Ces corps sont réunis par le droit, mais ils ne le sont pas par le fait: chacun des généraux en chef fait à peu près ce qu'il juge convenable pour sa propre sûreté; les choses en sont au point qu'il m'est très-difficile d'obtenir une situation. Le moral des généraux et en général des officiers est singulièrement ébranlé: commander ainsi n'est commander qu'à demi, et j'aimerais mieux être grenadier. Je vous prie, Monseigneur, d'obtenir de l'Empereur ou que je sois seul général en chef, ayant seulement sous mes ordres des généraux de division d'aile, ou que sa Majesté veuille bien me retirer de cet enfer. Je n'ai pas besoin, je pense, de parler de mon dévouement, je suis prêt à verser tout mon sang, mais je désire que ce soit utilement. Dans l'état actuel, la présence de l'Empereur pourrait seule rétablir l'ensemble, parce que toutes les volontés cèdent à son génie, et que les petites vanités disparaissent devant la majesté du trône."—LE PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA *au* MAJOR-GÉNÉRAL, *Wurtzen*, 10 *Septembre* 1813; THIERS, xvi. 436, *note*.

general fought bravely in battle when their blood was up, yet made no secret of the side to which their wishes inclined, and on many occasions not only deserted during the confusion of defeat, but joined the patriot ranks of Germany. The old enthusiasm of the Revolution was worn out; that of the empire was drowned in blood; the ardour of patriotism, the fervour of devotion, had passed over to the other side. In these circumstances, there can be no doubt that wisdom would have prescribed to the Emperor the abandonment of the line of the Elbe, and a retreat, with the main strength of his army still unbroken, to the Rhine. It was there that his real base of operations was to be found; and if 250,000 men had reached that frontier stream, it was difficult to see how they could ever be driven beyond it. But so decisive a step was not only repugnant to the iron soul and lofty aspirations of the Emperor, but it was open in a political point of view to very serious objections. It implied at once a confession of defeat, the abandonment of all the objects for which he was contending in Germany, and the loss of 100,000 veteran soldiers, who were immured in the fortresses on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula. All Europe would join the Allies the moment the French eagles repassed the Rhine; the Confederation of that river, the great bulwark of the empire, would become the advanced post of its enemies; and instead of the forces of Germany being divided, they would be hurled in a united mass against France, now reduced to its own resources.[1] Napoleon, however, did not deceive himself, however much he may have tried to deceive others. Immediately after this great defeat, he sent off to the Senate at Paris orders to call out 120,000 men of the conscription of 1810, 1811, and 1812, and one of 160,000 on that of 1815! The whole conscription of 1813 and 1814 was already in the depots. At the same time he wrote a long confidential letter, in cypher secretly, by Maret, to Clarke, the Minister at War,[2] enjoining him without delay

[1] Marm. v. 254-256.

[2] Thiers, xvi. 475-481.

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to put the fortresses on the Rhine in a proper posture of defence.*

62. Renewed movement of Schwartzenberg against Dresden. Sept. 5.

No sooner were the Allies made aware, from the cessation of the active pursuit of his column, that Napoleon with his Guards had set out in a different direction, than they resumed the offensive on the Bohemian frontier. The Russian and Prussian columns returned to all the passes of the mountains which they had traversed; Wittgenstein, with the right wing, reoccupied Nollendorf,

* "Les événements se pressent de telle manière qu'en laissant à S. M. des chances heureuses et brillantes, il est cependant de la prudence d'en prévoir de contraires. Je crois devoir, mon cher Duc, m'en expliquer confidentiellement avec vous. L'armée Russe n'est pas notre ennemi le plus dangereux. Elle a éprouvé de grandes pertes, elle ne s'est pas renforcée, et, à sa cavalerie près, qui est assez nombreuse, elle ne joue qu'un rôle subordonné dans la lutte qui est engagée. Mais la Prusse a fait de grands efforts. Une exaltation portée à un très-haut degré a favorisé le parti qu'a pris le souverain. Ses armées sont considérables, ses généraux, ses officiers, et ses soldats sont très-animés. Toutefois la Russie et la Prusse n'auraient offert que de faibles obstacles à nos armées, mais l'accession de l'Autriche a extrêmement compliqué la question.

"Notre armée, quelque prix que lui aient coûté les victoires remportées, est encore belle et nombreuse. Mais les généraux et les officiers fatigués de la guerre n'ont plus ce mouvement qui leur avait fait faire de grandes choses. Le théâtre est trop étendu. L'Empereur est vainqueur toutes les fois qu'il est présent; mais il ne peut être partout, et les chefs qui commandent isolément répondent rarement à son attente. Vous savez ce qui est arrivé au Général Vandamme. Le Duc de Tarente a éprouvé des échecs en Silésie, et le Prince de la Moskowa vient d'être battu en marchant sur Berlin. Dans de telles circonstances, mon cher Duc, et avec le génie de l'Empereur, on peut encore tout espérer. Mais il se peut aussi que des chances contraires influent d'une manière fâcheuse sur les affaires. On ne doit pas trop le craindre, mais on doit le regarder comme possible, et ne rien négliger de ce que commande la prudence. Je vous presente ce tableau afin que vous sachiez tout et que vous agissiez en conséquence.

"Vous feriez sagement de veiller à ce que les places fussent mises en bon état, et d'y réunir beaucoup d'artillerie, car nous faisons souvent dans ce genre des pertes assez sensibles. Vous devriez vous entendre secrètement avec le directeur général des vivres pour faire dans les places du Rhin des approvisionnements extraordinaires, enfin pour préparer d'avance tout ce qui convient, afin que dans une circonstance extraordinaire S. M. n'éprouvât point de nouveaux embarras, et que vous ne fussiez pas pris au dépourvu. Vous sentez que si je vous écris ainsi, c'est que j'ai bien réfléchi à ce qui se passe sous mes yeux, et que je suis assuré que je ne fais rien en cela que S. M. puisse désapprouver. Un grand succès peut tout changer et remettre les affaires dans la situation prospère où l'immense avantage remporté par S. M. les avait placées. Accusez-moi, s'il vous plaît, réception de cette lettre."—LE DUC DE BASSANO (MARET) *à* M. LE GÉNÉRAL CLARKE, *Ministre de la Guerre*, 8 *Septembre* 1813; THIERS, xvi. 441-443.

on the following day pushed on to Gieshübel, and on the 7th reached Pirna, and his advanced posts appeared in the neighbourhood of Dresden. At the same time Schwartzenberg, with the great body of the Austrians, had crossed the Elbe to Leumeritz, to reorganise his army and watch the defiles leading from Silesia; and information was received that Benningsen, with the Russian reserve, 45,000 strong, was advancing by rapid strides from the Oder, and might be expected on the Elbe by the end of the month. St Cyr and Murat retired before this advance; and the former instantly informed Napoleon. No sooner did the Emperor receive this intelligence than, as already mentioned, he ordered Macdonald to retire to Bautzen, near which Poniatowski was placed, so as to form a link of communication with the Grand Army, while he himself repaired with the Guard in the direction of Pirna. He there in the evening met, and had a long conference with, Marshal St Cyr, undoubtedly one of the ablest generals in Europe, to whom he in confidence admitted "that he had lost a brilliant opportunity of striking a great blow by halting the Young Guard at Pirna when Vandamme was advancing on Culm;" but he still maintained that the reserve of the army should now be directed against Bernadotte or Blucher, and that the Allies would attempt nothing against Dresden during his absence. "The chequer," said he to Marmont, "has become very complicated; it is I alone who can disembroil it."[1]

[1] St Cyr to Napoleon, Sept. 6, 7, 1813; St Cyr, iv. 397, 405; Marm. v. 255, 256; Cathcart, 259, 260.

63. Action at Nollendorf, and retreat of the Allies. Sept. 8.

But Napoleon was soon undeceived. Early on the following morning, when he was devising a fresh advance against Berlin, in which he himself with the Guards and cuirassiers were to bear a part, he was startled by the intelligence that Wittgenstein's Russians had made themselves masters of the plateau of Gahring, near Pirna, where they were fortifying themselves with diligence. The position was of the utmost moment, for in a few hours it could be rendered unassailable, and it com-

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manded the road by Pirna to Dresden. Instantly scanning the danger in its full extent, the Emperor, though part of the Guard only had come up, moved forward to dislodge the enemy from their vantage-ground with two divisions of infantry and the cuirassiers. But no sooner did Wittgenstein see the well-known uniform in the enemy's ranks, than, faithful to the orders he had received, he abandoned his advanced post and withdrew his men to join Kleist's corps, which occupied the heights of Nollendorf. At the same time Klenau's Austrians, which had advanced towards Chemnitz, withdrew to Marienberg, and the Allied troops at all points retired into the Bohemian valleys. Satisfied with this advantage, the Emperor pursued the enemy to the summit of the pass, and at the same time despatched a courier to the King of Saxony at Dresden, with the intelligence that the enemy at all points were expelled from the Saxon territory.[1]

[1] St Cyr, iv. 149, 150; Bout. 73, 74; Vaud. i. 174; Richter, ii. 96, 97.

64. Napoleon's conversation with St Cyr on the art of war.

On the evening following this exploit, Napoleon received accounts of the terrible disaster of Dennewitz from Ney's aide-de-camp, who brought him the intelligence. He immediately sent for the officer, questioned him minutely as to the whole particulars of the event, and having done so, he dismissed the officer, and began a conversation with St Cyr, who happened to be present, which lasted till past midnight. "He explained," says St Cyr, "in a manner equally lucid and satisfactory, the causes of the reverse, but without the slightest rancour at Ney or any of the generals engaged. He ascribed the whole to the difficulty of the art of war, which, he said, was far from being generally understood. 'One day or other,' said he, 'if I have time, I will write a book upon the subject, in which I will demonstrate its principles, in a manner so precise that they will be within the comprehension of every military man, and enable them to learn the art of war as they learn any other science.' 'It were much to be wished,' replied St Cyr, 'that the experience of such a

man as your Majesty should not be lost to France; but I doubt whether it would be practicable to form such a work, though, if any one could, it is your Majesty. It does not appear to me, however, that either the longest experience or practice has any effect in improving a commander. Of all the generals, whether on our side or that of our enemies, whom we have seen at the head of armies in Europe, in all the long wars which the French Revolution has occasioned, none appear to have gained much by experience; and I do not make any exception in your Majesty's own case, as I have always considered your first campaign in Italy as your *chef-d'œuvre* in war.' 'You are right,' replied the Emperor; 'considering the limited force at my disposal, it was my greatest campaign. I know but one general who constantly gained by experience, and that was Turenne, whose great talents were the result of profound study, and who had approached nearest to the end which I propose to demonstrate if I have one day time to compose the work which I contemplate.' This conversation," says St Cyr, with justice, "was brought on by one of the greatest disasters of the campaign—a disaster attended with terrible effects to the interests of many, and of none so much as himself. He spoke of it, nevertheless, as calmly as he would have done of the affairs of China or of Europe in the preceding century."[1]

[1] St Cyr, iv. 149, 150.

65. Halt of Napoleon on the summit of the Geyersberg. Sept. 9.

Next morning at daybreak, the Emperor resumed the pursuit—not along the great road by Peterswalde, by which the Allies were retiring, but by the lateral chaussée of Fürstenwalde, round their left flank, whereby he threatened to cut their communication with Töplitz. By nine o'clock on the morning of the 10th, St Cyr's corps, which formed the advanced-guard, reached the village of Ebersdorf on the summit of the Geyersberg, the highest point of the mountains between Saxony and Bohemia, from the heights adjoining which the eye can descry a considerable part of the plain

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stretching from Töplitz towards Prague. Napoleon ascended the heights, from whence he gazed long and earnestly on the scene before him. The sappers were working with ready zeal to render the road in the rear fit for the advance of the guns. Drouot, who was sent to report on their progress, returned with the information that it would take some hours to repair and again render practicable the passage. Meanwhile, Napoleon remained on the same spot, his eyes fixed on the scene before him. But it was not on the rocks, or the mountains, or the plains, that the eye of the Emperor was riveted. He saw in the distance the Prussians and Russians, rapidly forming in order of battle in the plain, while a large column of smoke suddenly arose from the Millerschauer, the highest point of the range, the signal which was to announce to all Bohemia that the decisive moment had arrived, and the invasion of the country commenced. The Allies were in considerable alarm, for they had never expected so early a resumption of the offensive by Napoleon; the Austrians were far in the rear on the other side of the Elbe, and the Russians and Prussians were ill prepared to meet the attack. They hurried to the front, however, with the utmost expedition, and fresh columns were every ten minutes seen to come up and take their ground, with admirable precision. In position were the Grand-duke Constantine's Russian Guards, Wittgenstein's men, and Kleist's Prussians. But there was no appearance of the Austrians; and St Cyr, who was beside the Emperor, strongly urged him to continue his advance, as the Russians and Prussians were in such a position that they could not retreat in presence of the French, but must fight where they stood. Napoleon, however, judged otherwise; his thoughts were still intent on the conquest of Berlin; and he said, after much thought, to St Cyr, "I will not attack the enemy in that position; but I will cautiously conceal from them my real design.[1] Let the engineers continue

[1] Lond 134, 135; Fain, ii. 332; St Cyr, iv. 156-158; Odel. i. 276, 277; Plotho, ii. 193; Thiers, xvi. 445-456.

to repair the road to-day and to-morrow, and suffer every one to remain in the belief that we are to have a great battle; if you are attacked on the mountains, I will support you." So saying, he returned to Pirna, and next day re-entered Dresden, having lost the only opportunity which occurred during the campaign of engaging with a superior force, detached from the Austrians, the Prussians and Russians.

66. Reasons of Napoleon's retreat to Dresden.

Ignorant of the departure of the Emperor, and expecting hourly a general attack, the Allies continued with the utmost expedition to concentrate their troops; and by midday on the 13th, the half of the Austrians had arrived, much fatigued, but in excellent order. There were now 100,000 men, with 800 guns in position at the foot of the heights, and a great battle was universally anticipated in both armies. But Napoleon had other views, and was influenced by still more pressing considerations. He was very uneasy at the terrible defeat which had been sustained by Ney at Dennewitz, which was the more disheartening that it had been mainly inflicted by the Prussians, and had already spread to a great extent discouragement and desertion through his army. He was still set upon an attack on Berlin, from the moral effect of which, if successful, he anticipated great results; and that object he considered paramount, even when the defeat of the Allied Grand Army was in the balance. He had received, also, desponding accounts from Macdonald, whose army since its defeat was in a very bad condition; and partisan corps had already appeared on his communications with Leipsic, and interrupted the passage of couriers and reinforcements from France. In a word, the wise plan of operations adopted at Trachenberg was now beginning to work out its appropriate fruits; and the French army, great as it was, assailed on all sides, was worn out with incessant marches and counter-marches, over ground exhausted by the repeated previous passage of troops. But St Cyr felt, and expressed at the time

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even to the Emperor, the deepest regret that the auspicious moment, when it was possible to engage the Russians and Prussians alone, without the Austrians, was lost; and to the end of his life, never ceased to assert that the French empire had been lost by that omission.[1]

[1] St Cyr, iv. 156-158; Thiers, xvi. 448, 449.

67. Fresh combats on the mountains.

What pains soever the Emperor might take to conceal his departure from the enemy, it at length transpired, from the uniforms of the Guard and cuirassiers being no longer seen in the ranks; and there was immediately felt the truth of St Cyr's words, that the opportunity of striking a decisive blow had been lost. Wittgenstein immediately ascended towards Nollendorf, and attacked Vandamme's late corps, now commanded by Lobau. It

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was driven over the plateau with the loss of 1500 men; and so severe did the pressure here become, that both St Cyr and Lobau were obliged to draw back to Gieshübel. No sooner was Napoleon informed of this check, than he again set out from Dresden, whither he had retired, and hastened to the front. On this occasion, however, he altered his line of advance; knowing, by dear-bought experience, that the country on the Fürstenwalde line was utterly exhausted, and the roads wellnigh impassable, he moved up the valley of the Elbe, and directed his attack, along the great road from Pirna by Peterswalde, against the Allied right, from which some posts had been thrown out, connecting the Grand Army with that of Blucher. Great exertions had been made by the Allies to effect

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this communication, and with success. On the 9th, Prince Modatoff, with a body of the Russian Horse Guards, surprised, between Bautzen and Dresden, a convoy of baggage and ammunition, blew up 200 caissons, and took a part of Napoleon's private baggage, with 1200 prisoners.

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On the 13th, Count Bubna, feeling his way from the Allied Grand Army, entered Neustadt and Neukirchen, and came into close communication with Blucher, whose advanced posts had been pushed beyond Bautzen to Bischofswerda. Continuing their advance along the Peters-

walde road on the 14th, the advanced posts of the Allied Grand Army were pressing on towards Gieshübel on the morning of the 15th, when they came in contact with Napoleon's advanced-guard, and were driven back at the first shock. Approaching Peterswalde, the French cavalry, in greatly superior forces, fell in with a body of Prussian hussars, which was defeated; and Colonel Blucher, son of the Marshal, after a gallant resistance, was made prisoner. A series of brilliant combats, with alternate success, now ensued, which ended in the retreat of the Allies from the mountains, and their taking up a position guarding the mouth of the pass. But though they there drew up to the number of nearly 100,000 men in order of battle in the plain, Napoleon did not deem it expedient to make an attack. The two mighty hosts stood facing each other, the one on the mountain, the other in the plain; and though every man in either camp expected a battle, yet none took place. The night presented a magnificent spectacle in the positions of the hostile armies. "The hills were lighted to their crests, and the valleys blazed with a sheet of fire."[1]

Sept. 14. Sept. 15.

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Sept. 20, 1813, MS.; Loud. 137; St Cyr, iv. 169, 170; Thiers, xvi. 452-456; Wilson, ii. 124-131.

68. Reasons on both sides for delaying great operations.

In truth, though the two armies were so near, the commanders on neither side were inclined to risk a general battle. The Allies had a very obvious reason for desiring delay. Benningsen, with the Russian army of reserve, 50,000 strong, was approaching, and might be expected to join the Grand Army by the 3d October, and the Prussian landwehr were daily increasing in number and efficiency; it was, therefore, clearly their policy to gain time, and delay active operations till these great reinforcements were in the field. Napoleon, on his side, was also expecting reinforcements, and 15,000 men had recently arrived at Erfurth, but they were young conscripts in very bad condition. His policy, at this time, was to contract the positions of his troops round Dresden as a centre, to render perfect the communication of the three armies, and await the moment when a false movement on

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the part of the enemy, in some quarter, might give him an opportunity of falling in great force on an isolated corps or unguarded point, and reinstating his affairs by a decisive blow. With this view, he ordered the construction, with every precaution for secrecy, of a third bridge at Pirna, in addition to the two already established between the forts of Koenigstein and Lilienstein. The object of this was to enable the Young Guard and part of St Cyr's corps to pass the Elbe suddenly and fall on the left of the enemy opposed to Macdonald, against whom he projected an offensive movement, as the position of the Allies in the plain of Culm appeared too strong, and their force there too great, now that the Austrians had come up, to offer the prospect of attacking them to advantage. Napoleon flattered himself that by this means he would succeed in rendering the position on the Elbe and at Dresden so strong, that he might securely pass the winter there.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 453-455; Cathcart, 261, 262; Lond. 137, 138.

69. Sharp action on the French left, followed by a retreat. Sept. 17.

Before carrying this design into execution, however, he resolved to make one reconnaissance more to see whether he could not find an opportunity of striking a blow against the Allies. It took place on the ensuing day (17th September), and at first promised to bring on a general battle; but no favourable opportunity of engaging with advantage presenting itself, it came to nothing important. Fifteen thousand of the French were directed by the Emperor against the Allied right, while eight thousand moved on in the centre and left, and thirty thousand infantry and cavalry remained in reserve. The French at first met with considerable success. Ziethen, who held the advanced post at the foot of the descent, was dislodged by Mouton Duvernet, and driven back in disorder towards Culm. Encouraged by this, Napoleon moved down to the foot of the descent, deeming that the opportunity of striking a blow had arrived. A thick mist overhung the upper part of the hills, and, spreading down upon the plain, concealed the greater portion of the Allies

from the enemy; when on a sudden, as the French were advancing on Culm, a loud cannonade burst forth in their front, and a storm of bullets fell on their columns. Napoleon ordered up his horse to attack the batteries, and several charges of cavalry against them took place, but without success; and at length, seeing that the enemy were sufficiently on their guard at all points, he drew back to his old position on the hills with the loss of seven guns and 2000 prisoners. "Their retreat," says Cathcart, "alone saved them from a disaster as great as that of Vandamme; for during the action Meerfeldt and Colloredo with an Austrian corps had, by advancing through the defile of the Elbe round their left, to the dominant heights of Nollendorf, got into their rear, and a panic had seized them, so that the thick fog alone saved the attacking corps from a total rout." This severe check convinced Napoleon that he would derive no advantage from prosecuting offensive operations in Bohemia; and it was against the army of Silesia that he now intended to direct his attacks. Accordingly he withdrew, followed by the Guards and cuirassiers, to Pirna on the 18th, from whence on the 19th he moved to Kœnigstein, where he carefully inspected the bridges, and on the 21st re-entered Dresden, accompanied by his Guard.[1] *

[1] Lond. 138, 139; Cathcart, 263, 264; St Cyr, iv. 121, 173, 174; Vaud. i. 170; Thiers, xvi. 460-464.

70. Great losses of the French in this hill campaign.

This fatiguing and harassing campaign in the hills, though unaccompanied by any great event, was attended with a most serious loss to both parties, but far greater to the French than their opponents, owing to their position on the cold and inhospitable summits of the mountains. The troops perched on these rude and lofty ridges, without shelter or covering of any kind except their greatcoats, were starving; stretched in bivouacs,

* "Yesterday I made a reconnaissance to ascertain the force and position of the enemy; and although the *debouche* of Peterswalde was favourable for artillery, the declivities being gentle, the position of the enemy did not permit me to attack him. I have resolved, therefore, to hold to the system of go and come, and to await my opportunity."—NAPOLEON *to* ST CYR, *Sept.* 18, 1813; ST CYR, iv. 421.

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night after night, with no protection against the frosty chills and frigid dews of autumn, felt with peculiar severity in those elevated regions, the young conscripts rapidly became sick, and were universally and woefully depressed in spirits. The few villages to be met with on the summits were entirely ruined; their roofs and partition-walls, with the whole furniture they contained, had been torn to pieces for firewood; it was with the utmost difficulty, and only by repairing a ruin, that quarters were got for the Emperor himself in the parish manse of Breitenlee. The subsistence of the men was in a still worse condition. Rich as Saxony is in agricultural productions, the fruits of its soil had been entirely exhausted by the enormous multitudes who had recently passed over or been quartered on its surface; the increasing numbers and audacity of the Allied cavalry rendered it next to impossible to get up any regular supplies from the rear; and great as the stores were which the Emperor had provided in the fortresses on the Elbe, it was found almost impossible to get them up to the front where the troops were bivouacked, owing to the deplorable state of the roads, and the exhaustion of the horses from want of forage. The hay and straw was everywhere totally consumed, the stack-yards emptied, the houses burnt or in ruins; while the fields of potatoes in the rural districts, oftentimes turned over in search of food, told to what grievous shifts the troops of all nations which had passed over them had been reduced.* These extremities of want and suffering rapidly produced their usual effects in utterly disorganising the troops. In vain the Emperor issued the most severe decrees, one in particular, that every tenth marauder should be shot, and recommended to every application for food that a similar

* "Not a vestige of forage was to be got for the horses. The frontier villages were all in ruins. All the houses not built of stone were torn to pieces for the fires of the bivouacs. The earth in the fields, which had been ten times turned over, was again and again turned over for the few potatoes which had escaped the eye of former plunder."—*Témoin Oculaire*, ODELEBEN, ii. 278.

chastisement should be bestowed on the commissary.* These sanguinary orders were wholly ineffectual in arresting the disorders. Stern necessity compelled the soldiers to leave their colours and wander through the fields in quest of food to assuage the pangs of hunger. The distribution of meat rations had entirely ceased; those of bread were reduced to a half; and nearly the whole army, with the exception of the Guards and cuirassiers, were obliged to forage for their own subsistence. The losses which this accumulation of evils brought on the army were incalculable; in a week they exceeded what would have been sustained in the most disastrous battle. The Allies too were suffering from these causes, for their troops were bivouacked at night; but not by any means in such a proportion as the French, for they were in a rich plain, not on barren hills, and they received ample supplies of provisions of all sorts from the fertile fields of Bohemia and Silesia in their rear.[1]

[1] Tém. Ocul. ii. 196, 197; Odel. i. 268, 269; St Cyr, iv. 176-179; Cathcart, 261, 262; Lond. 139, 140; Thiers, xvi. 463, 464.

71. Great successes of the Allied light troops in the French rear.

During the operations of the Grand Armies on the mountain chain which separates Bohemia from Saxony, the hostile circle which environed the French army was daily becoming more contracted, and the losses they sustained from the Cossacks and partisan corps in the rear more serious. On the 14th September Thielman took Weissenfels on the line between Dresden and France, and made 1300 men prisoners. A few days after, the Austrian colonel, Mensdorf, took a French courier with despatches and letters, 5000 in number, between Dresden and Leipsic, which gave the most dismal accounts of the

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* "The recent movements of the Grand Army had entirely exhausted the last resources of the country; and the soldiers having no longer the excitement of combat to distract their misery, felt it the more keenly. To all verbal communications on this head the answer of the Emperor always was—'Cause the commissary to be shot, and you will want for nothing.' To the written applications the answer always given was, to apply for decorations—these being more easy to supply than bread. At this moment (20th September) the Emperor issued a decree by which the town of Pirna, then at the lowest point of misery, and its inhabitants starving, should supply 6000 rations of bread a-day."—St Cyr, iv. 178.

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condition of the army, and the amount of the losses they had sustained in the late battles. "They recounted," says Sir Charles Stewart, "that of the whole corps engaged under Marshal Ney, only 16,000 had escaped with him, and 10,000 with Oudinot; all the rest had dispersed and sought refuge in Torgau and Wittenberg. Reinforcements to the amount of 15,000 men had arrived at Erfurth, but very infirm troops. It was also stated in these letters that the Young Guard, and especially its artillery, had suffered extremely in the battle of Dresden; that Generals Vachot and Leibu were killed, and Generals Dentail, Zios, Boisildien, Maison, Wern, and Aubert, severely wounded. The whole army is represented as discouraged, and suffering extremely from fatigue and want of provisions. General Blucher's last accounts are from Bautzen, with his advanced posts within a German mile of Dresden: and his light troops are in communication with those of the Prince Royal."[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Sept. 21, 1813, MS.

72. Fresh treaties concluded between England, Russia, and Prussia. Sept. 8, 9.

The severe wound which Sir Charles Stewart received at the battle of Culm, already mentioned, confined him much against his will at Töplitz for some weeks after; but he made good use of his time during this period of compulsory cessation of active operations in the field, in the part which he took in conjunction with his able coadjutor, Lord Cathcart, in the diplomatic communications of the period, which were attended with the most important consequences. Lord Castlereagh was indefatigable in his endeavours to take advantage of the general concord and enthusiasm which the late successes in war had produced, to draw still closer the bonds of union between the Allied Powers. In these efforts he was strongly and ably supported both by Lord Cathcart and Sir Charles Stewart, who had seen too clearly how nearly the Coalition had been dissolved by the disaster at Dresden, not to be aware of the paramount importance of profiting by the present auspicious moment to improve its relations. By their united exertions, aided by Metternich and Hardenberg,

a treaty was concluded and signed at Töplitz on the 8th September between Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain. By this treaty, which was the corner-stone of the Grand Alliance which afterwards effected the deliverance of Europe, it was provided that Austria should be reconstructed, as nearly as possible, on the footing on which she stood in 1805, the Confederation of the Rhine dissolved, and the independence of the intermediate States between the Rhine and the Inn established. Each of the Continental Powers contracting engaged to bring 150,000 men into the field, and they all engaged not to enter into any separate treaty with France. By the secret articles, the 32d military division of the French Empire, embracing Hamburg and the Hanse towns, was to be dissolved, and the princes of the family of Napoleon in Germany dispossessed. In consideration of the great exertions he had made to bring about this treaty, as well as his important military services during the campaign, the King of Prussia afterwards sent Sir Charles Stewart the orders of the Black and Red Eagles, accompanied by a letter, justly deemed one of the most honourable of the many honourable testimonials in the possession of the Londonderry family.[1] *

[1] Plotho, ii. 206-208; Bign. xii. 261; Lond. 380.

73. Napoleon in vain marches against Blucher, and returns to Dresden. Sept. 22.

Napoleon did not remain long inactive after his return to Dresden, on the 21st. The very next morning he set out with a great part of the Guards and cuirassiers across the Elbe to join Macdonald and throw back Blucher, who during his absence in the Bohemian mountains had established himself at Bautzen and on the Spree, and pushed his advanced posts to within four English miles

* "Le Roi, mon auguste souverain, sous les yeux duquel je me suis empressé de les mettre, m'ordonne de vous dire, M. le Général, que c'est pour vous donner une marque publique de son estime distinguée, et particulièrement de sa satisfaction de la valeur et des talents que vous avez déployé à côté de sa Majesté dans les differents combats auxquels vous avez assisté, et dans lesquels vous avez versé votre sang pour la cause commune, qu'il vous a décoré de les ordres de l'Aigle Noir et de l'Aigle Rouge.

"Veuillez agréer l'assurance réiterée de tout mon attachement et de ma haute considération. HARDENBERG.—4 *Decembre* 1813."—*MS.*

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of Dresden. He came up with the enemy in the wood of Hartau, and a skirmish of the advanced posts took place, in the course of which the village of Goldbach was burned. But Blucher, faithful to his instructions, fell back the moment he saw the uniforms of the Guards, and took up a strong position some miles in rear near Bischofswerda, where next day he stood fast. But the French Emperor, after hesitating long, did not deem himself in sufficient strength to attack. He had only Macdonald's three weak corps in hand; for of the Guards, worn out with incessant marching and countermarching, only a small part had come up, and the greater portion, unable to keep pace with his movements, had fallen behind, and were straggling in search of provisions. The utmost discouragement pervaded the army—toils, hardships, want, and the sword of the enemy had fearfully thinned their ranks; the war seemed endless, and if it did terminate, likely to lead to nothing but disaster. The troops, dejected and exhausted, exhibited none of their old spirit, and murmurs deep, though as yet half heard, began in the ranks against the insatiable ambition of the Emperor, which, rejecting all terms of accommodation, was hurrying them on to inevitable destruction. Sensible of this state of matters, and feeling now the want of soldiers, from the dreadful losses he had recently sustained, the Emperor halted his troops, and next day returned to Dresden, thus in effect abandoning the whole right bank of the Elbe. A dreadful thunder-storm came on as he was re-entering the Saxon capital, which, in the dejected state of the soldiers, was deemed a portentous omen.[1]

Sept. 23.

Sept. 24.

[1] Odel. i. 287-289; Fain, ii. 335, 336; Bout. 88; Cathcart, 265; Lond. 140.

74. Alarming intelligence from the rear and Lower Elbe.

Alarming intelligence was at the same time received from the rear and the Lower Elbe. The successful irruption of Thielman into Western Saxony, and the capture of Weissenfels, already mentioned, had indeed been amply avenged. Lefebvre Desnouettes, collecting 8000 horse, had attacked and defeated him with severe loss, and liberated the prisoners he had made. But Platoff, who

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had just descended with his Cossack cavalry from Bohemia, surprised and defeated him on the 26th, and having effected a junction with the remains of Thielman's detachment, expelled the French general from the open country, with the loss of 5 guns and 1500 prisoners, comprising some of the best cavalry in the French service. By this success the direct French communications with the Rhine were entirely cut off. The news from the north was still more alarming. Slowly advancing after the battle of Dennewitz, Bernadotte had at length reached the banks of the Elbe, and caused Bulow's corps to invest, on the right of the river, Wittenberg, the suburbs of which were carried on the 24th, while a bombardment was shortly after commenced; while Ney, whose army, grievously dejected, had sunk down to less than 40,000 men, was in no condition to interrupt the siege. Chernicheff, one of the boldest and most successful of the Russian partisans, had met with still more decisive success in Westphalia. Boldly crossing the Elbe at Dessau, at the head of 3000 horse, he advanced swiftly into Westphalia, pushed on to Cassel, from which he drove Jerome Buonaparte, proclaimed the dissolution of the kingdom, and stirred the flame of insurrection, far and wide, throughout its whole extent. Being destitute of infantry and artillery, however, he was unable to maintain the advanced position he had won; but he regained the Elbe in safety, his Cossacks laden with booty, having electrified all Germany by the decisive proof afforded of the ease with which a Napoleonic dynasty could be destroyed, and the slender hold it had of the affections of the people. A severe check, too, had recently before been experienced in the neighbourhood of Hamburg, where General Pecheux, who was leading his division, 6000 strong, from that fortress to Magdeburg, was surprised and defeated near Dannenberg by Walmoden, with the loss of 1200 killed and wounded, 1800 prisoners, and his whole artillery and caissons.[1]

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Sept. 26.
Sept. 28.
Sept. 24.
Sept. 30.
Sept. 16.

[1] Vaud. i. 186, 187; Bout. 85-87; Plotho, ii. 321; Varnhagen von Ense, 41.

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1813. 75. Napoleon's new plan of operations.

It was now evident that the defensive position and system of warfare which Napoleon had adopted on the Elbe could no longer be maintained. Chosen with judgment, and defended resolutely, though rashly, it had enabled him for six weeks to maintain his ground, in the face of great strategical disadvantages, in the heart of Germany, with forces little at first superior, latterly much inferior, to the enemy; to hold the Confederation of the Rhine, when ready to dissolve, to his standards; and to prevent a general insurrection from bursting forth in the whole western half of Germany. But the magnitude of his losses had been such, and the reinforcements which the Allies had received, or were soon to receive, by the arrival of Benningsen's reserve at their headquarters, and the universal arming of Prussia, were so considerable, that not only was the position no longer tenable, but the advantages already experienced from holding it could no longer be looked for. The misery of the troops, confined in a few fortresses, and crowded together in unhealthy streets or open bivouacs, had become great in the extreme. Often dozens of men and women were shut up in a single room not affording real accommodation for more than two or three inmates—sometimes a hundred were buried alive in a small house. The sick and the healthy, the wounded and the unhurt, were huddled together without covering or bed, often scarcely with food. To such a length did this frightful accumulation of human beings go, that it appears, from official documents, that the numbers who at different times were quartered on Dresden and its suburbs between the 15th June and the 15th November of this year, amounted to the enormous amount of 5,062,871![1] As a necessary consequence of this unparalleled crowding of men, many of them sick, wounded, or labouring under contagious disorders, in the fortresses on the Elbe, diseases of the most dangerous kind speedily appeared among them, and typhus fever proved more fatal than the sword of the enemy. From

[1] Odel. Tem. Ocul. 237.

the returns given by Sir George Cathcart, it appears that of the French force on the Elbe, composing the three armies under the Emperor's immediate orders, which in the beginning of the campaign numbered 356,000 men, present with the eagles, there only remained in the beginning of October 208,000 fit for duty; showing a loss in six weeks of no less than 148,000 men.* While Thiers, who speaks on the authority of Napoleon's private states, declares that his whole force had sunk down from 387,000 at the outset of the contest to under 250,000 now; in other words, had decreased by 137,000 in the aggregate, in spite of all supplies from the rear.

76. Forces and situation of the Allies.

On the other hand, the losses of the Allies, though large, had not been more than half of those sustained by the French; and they were about to be nearly compensated by the Russian reserve, under Benningsen, 50,000 strong, of whom 45,000 were effective, who were expected to join in

* Statement of the forces of Napoleon at the opening of the campaign of Leipsic, compared with their former strength at the opening of the campaign of Dresden :—

| Corps. | | In July 1813. Men. | | In October 1813. Men. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Old Guard, | 6,600 | | 4,000 |
| | Young Guard, | 32,000 | | 24,000 |
| | Cavalry of Guard, | 10,000 | | 6,000 |
| 1. | Vandamme, | 25,000 | Afterwards Lobau, | 6,000 |
| 2. | Victor, | 21,000 | | 18,000 |
| 3. | Ney (Souham), | 32,000 | Ney at Leipsic, | 22,000 |
| 4. | Bertrand, | 21,000 | | 14,000 |
| 5. | Lauriston, | 35,000 | | 10,000 |
| 6. | Marmont, | 30,000 | | 20,000 |
| 7. | Reynier, | 20,000 | | 8,000 |
| 8. | Poniatowski, | 15,000 | | 10,000 |
| 11. | Macdonald, | 21,000 | | 14,000 |
| 12. | Oudinot, | 24,000 | Broken up. | |
| 13. | St Cyr, | 31,000 | | 20,000 |
| | Latour Maubourg (cavalry) | 10,000 | | 6,000 |
| | Sebastiani (do.) | 13,000 | | 6,000 |
| | Milhaud (do.) | | | 3,000 |
| | Arreghi (do.) | 10,000 | Kellermann, | 4,000 |
| | Kellermann (do.) | | Augereau, | 10,000 |
| | Present and effective, | 356,000 | | 208,000 |
| | | 208,000 | | |
| | Loss during campaign, | 148,000. | | |

—CATHCART, 269.

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the first week of October. At length, therefore, and for the first time in the campaign, they had acquired a numerical superiority over the enemy in the field; they could bring from 290,000 to 300,000 to bear upon them, while they could be opposed only by 208,000.* Benningsen crossed the Elbe on the 25th and reached Töplitz on 2d and 3d October. The Allied troops, also, were in a far more favourable situation. Comfortably hutted or lodged in Prague, Töplitz, and the numerous towns and villages in the Bohemian plain, they were in a very different situation from the French, starving on the barren and frigid summits of the Boehmerwald. Their position enabled them to profit immensely by these advantages. An advance of a few miles from Töplitz towards the foot

* Statement of the Allied forces at the opening of the Leipsic campaign, as compared with what it had been at the opening of the Dresden campaign:—

| | In July 1813. Men. | In October 1813. Men. |
|---|---|---|
| Wittgenstein, | 40,000 | 16,000 |
| Russian reserve, | 24,000 | 18,000 |
| Reserve cavalry, | 11,000 | 8,000 |
| Kleist, | 25,000 | 29,000 |
| Colloredo, Chastellar, Giulay, Reserves, Klenau, — Austrians, | 50,500 | 49,000 |
| Blucher, Langeron, Sacken, Sherbatof, — Army of Silesia, | 75,000 | 82,000 |
| Swedes, | 25,000 | 20,000 |
| Winzingerode, | 12,000 | 17,000 |
| Bulow, | 20,000 | 24,000 |
| Tauenzein, | 5,000 | 10,000 |
| Benningsen, | | 20,000 |
| Tolstoy, — Russian reserve, | 6,000 | 20,000 |
| Nostitz (Bubna), | | 10,000 |
| | 293,000 | 323,000 |

Thus the Allied force was *increased* by 30,000, while the French was *diminished* by 148,000! This was chiefly owning to the astonishing efforts made by Prussia, which much increased the numerical strength of its corps, and the arrival of the Russian reserve, under Benningsen.—CATHCART, 270.

If 25,000 be added to Cathcart's estimate for his under-rating of the Austrian army in Bohemia, it will give the Allies about 350,000 men, of whom 290,000 would be available for operations beyond the Elbe.

of the mountains was sufficient to bring back the Guards and cuirassiers in breathless haste from the centre of Silesia to the summit of the Erzgebirge. Their wants, provided for by the wealth of England, and furnished by the rich agricultural plains in their rear, were amply supplied; rations were regularly served out to the men, and the necessity of providing for their daily wants by foraging and individual plunder, so fatal to military discipline, was unfelt. Above all, the general enthusiasm excited by the interesting cause in which they were engaged, and the glorious successes they had gained, preserved them from mental depression, and sent back such of the sick or wounded as were not labouring under fatal ailments in an incredibly short space into the ranks of war.[1]

[1] Lond. 139, 140; Bout. 88; Cath. 270.

77. Allied plan of operations against Napoleon.

"The plan of the campaign," says Sir George Cathcart, "adopted by the Allies, had for its basis a general concentration of all their armies on the main communication of Napoleon with France. This was the principle advocated by Moreau and others at the outset of the preceding campaign; and although it implied the abandonment, on the part of the Allies, of the main communication with the Russian territories, yet little was to be apprehended on that account; for the exhausted condition and national hostility of the countries to the east of the Elbe, and the important but precarious stake which Napoleon still held in those to the west, rendered the maintenance of a direct communication with his only proper base, the Rhine, an object of vital importance to him; while the Allies, having adopted the Bohemian frontier for their base, were in a great measure independent of the line of operations through Silesia, which they were about to abandon. To carry this plan into effect, it was agreed that the Army of the North, about 61,000 men, and General Blucher with that of Silesia, about 65,000, should cross the Elbe to the north of Dresden, and, acting in concert, move down upon the Saale at Halle or Merseburg; while the Grand Army, amounting

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to 120,000 men, should advance out of Bohemia by its left upon Lützen or Weissenfels.* When the three armies should be united near these points, in rear of the defiles caused by the rivers Pleisse, Elster, and Saale, they would be in complete command and possession of the enemy's communications, and thus united would amount to 246,000 men. Besides these, the troops left to defend the Bohemian passes and observe Dresden amounted to about 60,000 more, otherwise disposable according to circumstances. Thus operations were to commence on all sides with the month of October." "At the same time," says Sir Charles Stewart, "it was presumed that the favourable appearances from the side of Bavaria would shortly put in motion a combined force in the direction of Wurzburg, which would still further threaten the enemy's communications, and complete his embarrassments in every quarter of Germany." [1]

[1] Cathcart, 271, 272; Lond. 141.

78. Dissatisfaction of the Allies with Bernadotte, and consequent mission of Sir Charles Stewart to his headquarters.

As the object of these operations was to envelop Napoleon by the three armies, and force him back to the Rhine, and he occupied a central position with 200,000 men between them, they were attended with great hazard, and required for their successful prosecution the most entire concord and singleness of intention in all the Allied generals. In two, this great requisite was already secure. Of the fidelity and vigour of Blucher, not a doubt could be entertained; the only danger was, that he would be too ardent in the common cause: Schwartzenberg, though more circumspect, was equally to be trusted; and the presence of the sovereigns at his headquarters was the strongest security for the adoption of united measures. But with respect to Bernadotte, who was at the head of the great Army of the North, and whose co-operation was essential to the success of the joint operations, the case was very different. Grave suspicions had

* According to Wilson, who, from his official position as commissioner with the Austrian headquarters, is perhaps the best authority on the subject, the Allied Grand Army which marched on Leipsic numbered in all 179,000 men. —*See* WILSON, ii. 166.

been awakened by his conduct, which the recent successes gained by the army under his command had nowise tended to dispel. Though he had repulsed the enemy at Gross Beeren, and defeated him at Dennewitz, yet on neither of these occasions had the victory been improved as it might have been. On both, the battle had been begun by the Prussian generals without his orders, and gained in effect before his arrival on the field. The system which he had adopted, on the eve of each, of having the Prussians in front, the Russians behind them, and *the Swedes a day's march behind the Russians*, not only exposed the troops first engaged to great hazard, but rendered the acquisition of decisive success in the end next to impossible. It was owing to these causes that the battle of Gross Beeren had been only a partial success in the centre, that of Dennewitz far less decisive than it might have been rendered. It was well known that in the close of the last of these battles, when the Russians and Swedes, preceded by 150 guns, advanced against the broken French centre, the enemy were thrown into a degree of confusion almost unparalleled in modern warfare, and that if the 9000 noble horse which the Prince Royal had under his orders had been let loose to charge, 10,000 additional prisoners would have been made. The immense advantage of having the centre routed and the two wings separated, had by no means been improved as it might have been; the broken and dispersed army was allowed to retire without molestation to the Elbe, while the victor remained inactive at Jüterbock, only a few miles from the field of battle. These facts were well known at headquarters, and Sir Charles Stewart disclosed the discoveries he had made as to his secret relations with the French Emperor, when professing the most ardent zeal in the Allied cause.[1]* The result was that, with the

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Oct. 1, 1813, MS.; Richter i. 438-441; Bout. 68, 69.

* *Sept. 10th.*—"Yesterday evening General Stewart arrived. I was most happy to see him and to find that he had not been seduced by Bernadotte,

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entire concurrence of the British Government, it was determined to send Sir Charles Stewart, who had now recovered of his wound, to the headquarters of the Prince Royal, to be a check upon the movements of the latter, and endeavour to bring him into cordial co-operation with the other Allied armies.

79. Napoleon's plan for the remainder of the campaign.

The intentions of the French Emperor were thus explained in the 15th bulletin of the Grand Army: "The Emperor's intention was to pass the Elbe, to manœuvre upon the right bank, between Dresden and Hamburg, to threaten Potsdam and Berlin, and to assume Magdeburg for the centre of operations, which has been supplied with stores and provisions for that purpose." It is easy to see from this announcement that, notwithstanding all the misfortunes which he had undergone, the mind of the Emperor was by no means brought down to the level of his position; and that the only *defensive* war which he contemplated was an *offensive* one, which might strike terror into his enemies, and support the prestige of his name among the nations of Europe. His views, and the reasons on which they were founded, were thus unfolded to St Cyr, at a midnight conference on the 6th October. "I am going to leave Dresden," said he, "and I shall take the remains of Vandamme's and your corps along with me. I shall certainly be soon engaged in a decisive battle. If I am successful, it will be a matter of regret if I have not my whole force at my disposal to profit by it; if I experience a reverse, you will be of more use to me than you could if you were left here. Remaining in Dresden in such an event, you would be lost without resource. Besides, of what use is Dresden now to me? It can no longer be considered as the pivot of my army, which is unable to find subsistence in the

whom he describes as a great *fanfaron* unworthy of trust, and one who desires general peace with France that he may renew the ancient relation with Sweden. Colonel Cooke, who had seen a great deal of him, tells me that he has said that 'if anything happens to Buonaparte the French people would select him or Moreau as their chief.'"—WILSON's *Diary*, ii. 74.

exhausted country which surrounds it. As little can it be regarded as a grand depot; there remain in it only provisions for a few days: almost all the stores of ammunition and provisions it contains are exhausted, and what little remains must be speedily distributed among the soldiers. There are at Dresden 12,000 sick and wounded; but they will almost all die, as they are the remains of 60,000 who have entered the hospitals there since the campaign commenced. When winter sets in, the Elbe no longer affords a position: being frozen, it can be passed at any point. I am about to take up a new position which is everywhere defensible. I shall throw back my right as far as Erfurth, support my left by Magdeburg, and my centre by the heights forming the left bank of the Saale, which form a natural bulwark, capable at any time of arresting an enemy. Magdeburg will become to me another Dresden: it is a noble fortress, which can be left if necessary to its own resources, without the risk of its being carried, as Dresden might have been during the three days that the Allies were before its suburbs, if they had been commanded by a man of capacity. Dresden can never be made a strong place without destroying the vast suburbs which at present constitute the principal ornament of that beautiful capital. In addition to this, it would require to be re-stored with ammunition and provisions, and it is now impossible to introduce them. In fine, I desire to change my position. Dresden is too near Bohemia; no sooner have I left it, even upon the shortest expedition, than the enemy are before its walls, and I cannot prevent that by threatening their rear. By the more distant position which I propose to take, I shall be in a situation to direct great strokes against them, and compel them to conclude a durable peace." St Cyr expressed, as well he might, his entire concurrence in the masterly views so lucidly expressed: it would have been well for Napoleon if he himself had not afterwards deviated from them.[1]

[1] St Cyr, iv. 186-188.

# CHAPTER XI.

## BATTLES OF LEIPSIC AND HANAU. OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 1813.

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1. First movements of the Allies. Oct. 4.

THE arrival of Benningsen's reserve, which began on the 1st of October, was the signal for the commencement of great operations. Eight thousand Prussians at the same time arrived at Töplitz, which increased the Russian and Prussian forces (without Benningsen's) to 75,000 effective men, in addition to the Austrians, who were now fully 60,000 more. Great difficulties, however, were experienced in arranging the direction of the three armies, from the jealousies of the Russian and Prussian generals, who positively refused to take orders from the Austrian commander-in-chief. They had hitherto acted separately, and done tolerably well, when at a distance, and each acting under the orders of his own sovereign; but it was more than doubtful if the same harmony would be preserved if they were brought into immediate and personal collision. It was resolved, therefore, to join the armies of Blucher and the Prince Royal, who would form together a mass of nearly 150,000 combatants, and to leave the united armies of Benningsen and Bohemia to advance on the other side into the plains of Leipsic.[1]

[1] Lond. 142; Cathcart, 372; Plotho, i. 147; Bout. 92; Marm. v. 267-272.

2. Brilliant passage of the Elbe by Blucher. Oct. 2.

Blucher was the first in motion, and he executed the part assigned to him with equal vigour and success. Leaving a division opposite Dresden to restrain the incursions of its garrison, he marched on the 1st October with the remainder of his forces, about 65,000 strong,

towards the Elbe, which he reached on the night of the 2d. Having deceived the enemy by a false demonstration by his advanced-guard under Sacken against Meissen as to the real point where the passage was to be attempted, he himself moved the bulk of his forces to the mouth of the Schwarze Elster, where the passage in good earnest was to be effected. Three bridges were thrown across with the utmost rapidity; and so admirable were the arrangements made, that by six next morning half the army was over, not only without opposition, but without the operation having even been discovered. Having effected the passage he attacked Bertrand, who had taken up a position barring the way at Wartenburg, a short distance from the river, with 14,000 men, and, after a hard combat, drove him back with the loss of 600 killed and wounded, and as many prisoners.* Headquarters were next day advanced to Düben. On the same day Bernadotte crossed the Elbe in two columns, the Russians at Ackow, the Swedes at Roslau, so that both armies were in communication on the left bank of the river with each other. On the day following Bulow and Tauenzein were also crossed over, leaving 14,000 men only under Thumen to continue the blockade of Wittenberg. Ney, who had now only Reynier's weak corps, 12,000 strong, under his immediate command (that of Oudinot having been dissolved after Dennewitz), retreated before forces so considerable, evacuated Dessau,[1] and after summoning Bertrand's corps and Dombrowski's detached

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[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 645, 646; Bout. 93, 94; Fain, ii. 363, 364; Lond. 141.

* As an instance of the extraordinary and almost inconceivable credulity or inaccuracy of M. Thiers as to *numbers*, especially of his *enemies*, in particular actions, though he is scrupulously correct as to the *general* numbers of the French engaged in a campaign, movements, places, and generals employed, the following account he has given of this combat may be taken. After mentioning the details of this affair, and admitting that the Allies gained the victory, and drove the French, after a long and glorious resistance on their part, from their position, he adds, "Toutefois nous n'eûmes pas plus de 500 hommes hors de combat, *tandis que l'ennemi en eut cinq ou six mille!*"—THIERS, xvi. 486. Blucher's loss in this affair was under 1000 men. In *every battle*, even their most serious defeats, and even in the battle of Leipsic itself, Thiers makes the loss of the Allies greater than that of the French.

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division to join his standard, withdrew by Bitterfield towards Leipsic.

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3. Advance of the Grand Army into the plains of Leipsic.

During these operations on the banks of the Elbe, the Grand Army of Bohemia was emerging from the defiles of Bohemia into the Saxon plains. The movements are thus described by Sir Charles Stewart: "Prince Maurice of Lichtenstein was to march with 5000 Austrians on Gera to support Platoff, Thielman, and all the partisan corps, which communicated by a prodigious circle round the ground occupied by the enemy, so as to be in communication with the Prince Royal's army in the north. Klenau, with 25,000, was to move on Chemnitz; Kleist and Wittgenstein's corps, 30,000 strong, were directed on Marienberg; Giulay was moved on Zwickau; the 1st and 2d Austrian corps on Kommotau, and Barclay de Tolly, with the Russian headquarters, to Brux. Benningsen, with the reserve, which was much fatigued by its long march through Germany, remained at Töplitz. The effect of these movements was to bring 100,000 men in the first week of October into the Saxon plains, directly on the enemy's communications, whose movement on the flank was to be continued to Erfurth, where an attack on their magazines was to be attempted. A hundred and thirty thousand under Blucher and Bernadotte were in communication on the left bank of the Elbe, so that the French army, which could not muster more than 200,000 combatants, who were daily melting away from the effects of fatigue and desertion, was environed on all sides by superior forces, having their communications and retreat perfectly secure."[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Oct. 9, 1813, MS.

4. Napoleon's position at Dresden.

During the ten days when the armies of the Allies were thus contracting the circle by which he was surrounded, Napoleon remained inactive at Dresden. His prolonged stay there during so critical a period of his fortunes has been often ascribed to indecision; but this is a mistake. He was watching an opportunity before leaving it, of striking a blow against the first of his adversaries who might

commit a false movement. "I will not go out again," said he to St Cyr, "*I will wait.*" In pursuance of this plan he summoned up Augereau, who lay at Mayence with 15,000 newly raised conscripts, to Leipsic, and concentrated his army on all sides, to be ready for the conflict which was evidently approaching, but without attempting himself any offensive movement. He dissolved Macdonald's army, leaving that marshal with his own corps alone in front of Dresden. He sent Souham's corps, along with that of Marmont and Latour Maubourg's cavalry, to Meissen, a small town on the Elbe below Dresden, where they were at hand either to join himself or to succour Ney in case of a passage by the Allies of the lower course of that river. He withdrew Lauriston into the Saxon capital, and despatched Poniatowski to unite with Lefebvre Desnouette's cavalry, and cover, along with Victor, from the side of Bohemia, the great road from that place to Leipsic.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 474.

5. Napoleon's plans at this period.

Napoleon, after he heard of the passage of the Elbe by Blucher and Bernadotte, entirely altered his plan of the campaign, and, instead of adopting the system which he himself had so clearly shown to St Cyr to be advantageous, of abandoning Dresden and taking St Cyr along with him to concentrate all his forces for a grand attack on some part of the circle of his enemies, he left that general with 30,000 men there, directing him to hold himself in readiness to retire at the shortest notice, but not to move till enjoined by him; while he himself marched to the northward to join Ney, who was retreating before the Prince Royal. To observe and keep in check the Allied Grand Army, which was fast issuing from the defiles of the Bohemian mountains, and moving by Marienberg and Chemnitz on Leipsic, he left Murat with 50,000 men, composed of the corps of Victor, Lauriston, and Poniatowski, near Freyberg, with orders to maintain his position there as long as possible, and, when he could do so no longer, to retire slowly towards Leipsic. Augereau's corps, coming

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up from Mayence, was ordered to join him with Arrighi, which was in all 25,000 more. With the remainder of the army, consisting of the Guards and cuirassiers with the corps of Macdonald and Souham, he proceeded by Meissen and Wurtzen to join Ney's army, consisting of the remains of the corps of Bertrand, Oudinot, and Reynier, to whose support he had already pushed on Marmont from Meissen to Eilenberg. This united force formed a mass of 140,000 combatants, occupying a central position, and holding all the fortified passages over the Elbe; and as the united armies of the Prince Royal and Blucher, though equal in numerical amount, were very much scattered, and the fidelity of the former was more than doubtful, there was the fairest prospect of striking a decisive blow,* driving the Allies over the lower Elbe beyond Berlin, and then returning by the right bank to Dresden, from whence he would debouch on the rear of the Grand Army as it was threatening Leipsic and his communications.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 366, 367; Odel. ii. 207-211; Jom. iv. 434; Thiers, xvi. 489-500.

6. Napoleon's advance against Blucher.

In pursuance of this design, Napoleon, during the 9th and 10th, when his forces were converging towards Düben, issued orders for the temporary evacuation of the right bank of the Elbe, adding, "To carry off all the cattle, burn the woods, and destroy the fruit-trees." The rapidity with which the movement was conducted, however, prevented the literal execution of this barbarous

* Napoleon's instructions to Murat, who commanded the army of observation towards Chemnitz, were in these terms, and fully explained his views: "I have raised the siege of Wittenberg, and separated the corps of Sacken from those of Langeron and D'York. Augereau this evening will be at Lützen or Leipsic, and Arrighi has orders to join him; the two united will bring you a reinforcement of at least 30,000 men. One of two things will happen. Either I shall attack the enemy to-morrow and beat him, or if he retires, I shall burn the bridges over the Elbe. Then you must do what you can to maintain Leipsic in order to give me time to beat the Army of Silesia; but if you are compelled to abandon Leipsic, you must direct your course towards the Mulde. The bridges of Düben and Eisenberg are guarded. *My intention is to move over to the right bank of the Elbe and manœuvre between Magdeburg and Dresden,* debouching by one of my four fortified places on that river to surprise the enemy." — NAPOLEON *to* MURAT, *October* 10, 1813; JOMINI, iv. 435, 436.

order, and the swift approach of the light troops of the Allies threw back the numerous swarms of stragglers whom the French left behind them. The losses sustained, however, by fatigue and desertion, especially among the German troops, were very severe, amounting, during the movement to Düben, to fully 20,000 men. Dresden was speedily invested, and above 12,000 men in the last stages of sickness and misery shut up in its hospitals, besides 30,000 good soldiers to defend the fortifications. Napoleon, having now united with Ney and Marmont, found himself at the head of 140,000 men, with whom he pressed vigorously forward in the hope of interposing between Bernadotte, who lay at Zörbig, and Blucher, who was marching across from the Elbe to join him, at right angles to the line pursued by the French Emperor. The French, pressing from Eilenberg, down both banks of the Mulde towards Düben, came right on the flank of the columns of the Silesian Army engaged in their cross march. At the approach of forces so great, Blucher hastily evacuated Düben, which was immediately occupied by their advanced-guard, and succeeded, with the corps of Langeron and D'York, by a forced march, in reaching Zörbig late in the evening, where he formed a junction with Bernadotte. So near, however, was Napoleon's design of succeeding, that Sacken, on the evening of the same day, following on the traces of Blucher with his corps, approached Düben, when fully occupied by the French troops, and only escaped by making a rapid circuit by the village of Sokana.[1]

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[1] Jom. iv. 436; Bout. 97, 98; Fain, ii. 369; Plotho, ii. 253-257.

7. The opposite armies mutually pass each other.

Although the advance of Napoleon between the two armies, however, was not attended with the whole advantages which he anticipated, yet it brought the Allies into very great danger, and fully demonstrated the justice of the military principles on which it had been projected. On the day succeeding their junction, Blucher and Bernadotte had a conference; but although there was a constrained courtesy on both sides, yet there

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was no cordiality, and little appearance of reciprocal confidence. The ardent, impetuous disposition of the Prussian field-marshal could not sympathise with the cautious, interested circumspection of the Prince Royal, whom the approach of the French Emperor had filled with consternation. It was evident from this meeting that little was to be hoped from joint operations conducted by independent commanders, actuated by such opposite feelings and motives of action.* Meanwhile the movements on both sides in opposite directions—the Allies towards the Saale, the French towards the Elbe—continued, and soon became so pronounced, that it was evident that a serious crisis was approaching, and that in a few days a decisive battle would be fought, by which the fate of Europe would probably be decided. Both parties had mutually crossed their opponents, and each hoped that, by striking at the enemy's communications, he would draw back his troops and stop his advance. Blucher and Bernadotte, at Zörbig, were between Napoleon and the Rhine, while he at Düben was between them and the Elbe. Each army disregarding its own, lay in great strength upon its opponent's communications. This strange and bold movement continued on both sides without intermission during

Oct. 11.

the whole of the 11th. The Prince Royal and Blucher, leaving Thumen with a small division before Wittenberg, and Tauenzein at Dessau, to guard the bridge there, instead of returning towards the Elbe, continued their advance to the south-west, and established themselves,

* "Benningsen's report of the Crown Prince is consonant with what I have stated; but I learn from another quarter that the Crown Prince has declared *he will not cross the Elbe*, but look to operations that may secure him Norway. We shall rue ere the winter is over that gentleman's connection. Already he checks Prussian movements by the fear of his views, and thus more than nullifies to the general interests the forces under his command. His stanchest friends here now admit he is a 'fanfaron and egregious liar.'"—WILSON'S *Diary*, ii. 153.

"*October* 15.—I must not omit to note that the Crown Prince has had a battle-royal with the foreign generals and ministers about his person. He told them that he wanted no counsel, and would have no counsellors; but Blucher will not obey his orders to retreat."—*Ibid.*, ii. 160.

the latter at Halle, the former at Bernberg and Rothenburg, directly between Napoleon and the Rhine, and in such a situation that they could easily open a communication with the Grand Army advancing from Chemnitz and Kommotau. Napoleon, on his part, pushed forward Reynier to raise the siege of Wittenberg, Bertrand to destroy Blucher's bridge at Wartenburg, and Ney to Dessau, to get possession of the important bridge there. The former, with the aid of the garrison, speedily drove Thumen from before Wittenberg, and raised the siege of that place; while Tauenzein, in no condition to withstand the greatly superior forces of Ney, abandoned Dessau after breaking down the bridge there, and fell back by Zerbst towards Berlin. Napoleon was highly elated with these advantages, particularly at seeing the road to the Prussian capital open before him; and he wrote to St Cyr that he had raised the siege of Wittenberg, driven back the Silesian army, and was about to cross to the right bank of the Elbe with his whole forces, by which bank he would return to Dresden.[1] *

[1] Napoleon to St Cyr, Oct. 11, 1813, St Cyr; Jom. iv. 436; Vaud. i. 190; Die Grosse Chron. i. 555, 556.

8. Timid conduct of Bernadotte, which endangers Blucher.

This advance of the French Emperor towards the Elbe, menacing Berlin, completely paralysed Bernadotte's operations, and seriously endangered the army of Silesia. Napoleon's plan was on the very point of proving successful, and a great victory on the Elbe re-establishing his affairs. Bernadotte, whose force, as Tauenzein was driven over to the right bank, did not exceed 55,000 men, of course could make no head singly against Napoleon, who had 130,000 in hand. His true policy in these circumstances would have been to have *closed up with Blucher;* and their united force, of nearly equal strength with the French, would have enabled him to combat them on equal terms, or, at all events, maintain

* "I have raised the siege of Wittenberg: the army of Silesia is in full retreat by the left bank: to-morrow I will compel it to receive battle, or abandon the bridges of Dessau and Wartenburg. I shall then probably pass over to the right bank; and it is by the right bank I shall return to Dresden." —NAPOLEON *to* ST CYR, 11*th October* 1813.

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their ground till the Grand Army of Bohemia came up. Instead of this, he *detached himself entirely from Blucher*, who remained at Halle, and fell back after recrossing the Saale, which he had passed as far as Köthen, towards the Elbe. The effect of this diverging retrograde movement was to expose Blucher, who now stood alone at Halle, cut off from the Elbe, to the blows of the French Emperor and very great danger. It may easily be conceived that this retrograde movement of Bernadotte to Köthen, in presence of Napoleon, while he himself remained at Halle on the Saale, in pursuance of the general plan of operations, did not increase the confidence of Blucher in the royal ex-French Marshal.[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvi. 545-547; Lond. 161; Bout. 150; Vaud. i. 197, 198; Cathcart, 189.

9. Napoleon, in consequence, leaves St Cyr at Dresden.

The success which in the first instance, however, attended this bold irruption of Napoleon towards the Berlin road and the communications of the armies of Silesia and the North, exercised a great and, as it proved in the end, fatal influence on his fortunes. By restoring his confidence in his star, and inducing the belief that he was on the eve of a decisive triumph, it led him to abandon the wise plan which, as already shown, he had previously formed of sacrificing all lesser objects for this great blow, and abandoning Dresden to accumulate his whole force between Wittenberg and Magdeburg. He never doubted now, that after routing and severing the Prince Royal and Blucher, and capturing Berlin with his left wing, he would return to Dresden in triumph by the right bank. He accordingly entirely changed his plans as to St Cyr, and, deeming it now no longer necessary to abandon Dresden, he sent that General positive orders to suspend the evacuation of that town, and of the camp at Pirna,

* "Il semblait que l'une des deux armées du bas Elbe, celle de Bernadotte, avait repassé sur la rive droite de l'Elbe, et que l'autre au contraire, celle de Blucher, était restée sur la rive gauche, avec tendance à remonter vers Leipsic par derrière la Mulde. Les mouvements ordonnés la veille, particulièrement celui de Marmont, répondaient parfaitement à cette indication."—THIERS, xvi. 514. Part only of Bernadotte's army—viz., Tauenzein's corps—had retreated across the Elbe; the bulk of it had only receded as far as Köthen, a day's march from Halle, where Blucher had his headquarters.

which had been already commenced and was far advanced, and to maintain his post to the last extremity. With a heavy heart that able commander obeyed his new instructions, foreseeing clearly that the Emperor's fatal propensity *to grasp at everything at once and abandon nothing*, was about to involve him in fresh difficulties. His anticipations proved too well founded; the 30,000 men which lay inactive at Dresden would have probably turned the scales of fortune on the field of Leipsic.[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvi. 492-500; St Cyr, iv. 492; Napoleon to St Cyr, Oct. 11, 1813, Ibid.

10. Napoleon's own account of his views at this time.

Napoleon has told us himself what his plan of operations at this time was. "He intended to have allowed the Allies to advance into the country between the Elbe and the Saale, and then, manœuvring under protection of the fortresses and with the aid of the magazines of Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, and Hamburg, to have carried the war into the territory between the Elbe and Oder, on which latter river France still held Glogau, Stettin, and Cüstrin; and, according to circumstances, to have raised the blockade of Dantzic, Zamosc, and Modlin, on the Vistula. Such were the advantages which might have been expected from this vast plan, that the Coalition would have been dissolved by it."[2] He himself entér-

[2] Napoleon in Montholon, ii. 125.

* Napoleon's first orders to St Cyr on 4th October, were as follows:—"Napoléon lui traça ensuite tout ce qu'il aurait à faire pour l'évacuation de cette ville [Dresden]. D'abord il devait évacuer successivement Kœnigstein, Lilienstein, Pirna, lever en même temps les ponts établis sur ces divers points, réunir les bateaux qui en proviendraient, en conserver une partie à Dresde même pour le cas où l'on y retournerait, charger les autres de vivres, de munitions, de blessés, et les expédier sur Torgau. Tout en faisant ces choses qui ressemblaient si fort à une évacuation définitive, le Maréchal St Cyr devait dire hautement qu'on ne songeait pas à quitter Dresde, que loin de là on allait s'y établir, et se servir de ce langage pour ôter aux habitants la velléité de s'agiter. Puis ces dispositions terminées, ses trente mille hommes tenus sur pied, il devait décamper au premier signal, et rejoindre Napoléon par Meissen."—THIERS, xvi. 492, 493.

His second orders, a week later, were just the reverse:—"Il suspendit l'évacuation de Dresde à laquelle le Maréchal St Cyr était tout préparé. Il ne la contremanda pas précisément, mais il prescrivit de la différer, par le motif que l'ennemi s'engageant à fond, soit du côté de la Bohême, soit du côte de la Mulde et de l'Elbe, la bataille tant désirée devenait certaine, la victoire aussi, et qu'alors il serait bien heureux d'avoir conservé Dresde, où le quartier général rentrerait presque aussitôt qu'il en serait sorti."—THIERS, xvi. 500.

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tained the most sanguine hopes of success from this great operation; and firmly expected to be able to return to Dresden by the right bank of the Elbe, and debouch from thence on the rear of the Allied Grand Army. He was in an especial manner desirous to conceal it entirely from the enemy. All the orders to the different marshals and generals were given in cypher, and with the most positive injunctions of secrecy; "for," said Napoleon, "during three days it is the secret of the army involving the salvation of the empire."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 507.

11. Discontent in the French army at this project.

Notwithstanding all his efforts, however, to keep his intentions concealed, it was impossible for the Emperor to prevent his generals from divining them, for the direction given to the march of the troops clearly proved what was in contemplation. Many of the marshals were seized with consternation when the intention to carry the war beyond the Elbe into Northern Prussia transpired; and it must be admitted they had good ground for their apprehensions. They felt the danger of plunging with 250,000 men, supposing he took with him all the garrisons, into the north of Germany, when 350,000 of the Allies were preparing to interpose between them and the Rhine, and cut them off from all communication with France. In the desperate strife in which they were about to engage, when each party passed his adversary and threw himself upon his communications, would not the more numerous body prevail over the less numerous—that which was strongest in light horse over that which was weakest? What would the Allies lose by the war being transferred into Prussia, except Berlin, and the warlike resources, now nearly exhausted, of that country? There still would remain to them the rich and fertile territories of Bohemia, Silesia, and Austria, from whence they could derive all needful supplies. But if the French were once cut off from the Rhine, a few weeks' warfare like that to which they had just been exposed, would be sufficient to exhaust all their resources;[2] and the very magnitude of their forces would only the

[2] Fain, ii. 572, 573; Las Cases, vi. 38-40; Jom. iv. 438, 439.

sooner induce ruin, by consuming all their provisions and ammunition.

The knowledge of these discontents, together with uncertainty as to the movements of Blucher and Bernadotte, who were now reported to be moving towards Leipsic, caused doubt to arise in the mind of Napoleon as to the feasibility of carrying out his plan, and rendered his stay in the gloomy old chateau of Düben, amidst a howling tempest of wind and rain, desolate and mournful in the extreme. We possess, fortunately, the best possible evidence of his views at this eventful crisis, in an interview which he had with Marshal Marmont on the night of the 10th, at Düben, which lasted till daybreak on the 11th. That able general, in a long and most interesting conversation with Napoleon on that occasion, thus expressed himself: "The only course which remains to your Majesty, is a vigorous offensive against the armies of Blucher and the Prince Royal, now in communication on the left bank of the Elbe. With the 130,000 men whom you have in hand, and disposable, you are in a situation to gain the most decided advantages. Eight days of active operations will suffice for that purpose; being master of all the fortified places on the Elbe, you have every facility for undertaking them. By so doing, you will bring yourself on the enemy's communications; you may reinforce your army by a great part of the garrisons on the Elbe, and thus both greatly increase your own force, and extricate the old soldiers composing them from a situation, in the event of a reverse, of the utmost danger. To effect this, all that is necessary is, that the three corps left at Dresden and on the Bohemian frontier—viz., the 2d, 5th, and 8th—with Murat's cavalry, should retire slowly towards your Majesty's headquarters here, while St Cyr, with the whole garrison of Dresden, should move rapidly by the right bank of the Elbe on Torgau and Wittenberg, taking the garrisons of these places with him. Davoust can easily bring up 20,000 from Dantzic, after providing

12. Napoleon's interesting conversation with Marshal Marmont.

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for the defence of that place. The necessity of abandoning Dresden, after the turn events have taken, has long been evident, and can no longer be matter of doubt. The hostile dispositions of Bavaria cannot be unknown to you; by removing the theatre of war from that power, you retard or weaken its action against you."

13. Continued.

"During these remarks," says Marmont, "the Emperor continued attentive but silent. It was evident he could not bring himself to the voluntary abandonment of Leipsic. On the contrary, he was disposing everything for a grand battle under its walls. He wished to preserve everything: *he lost all by wishing to preserve all.*" "I will not fight," said he, "but when I am inclined; they will not dare to attack me." "The great losses which your Majesty's army has sustained," replied Marmont, "have arisen, not so much from the sword of the enemy, as from the entire want of provisions, care, and attention requisite for the soldiers. If they had been properly attended to in the hospitals, 50,000 men more than you now have, at the very least, would have stood in your ranks. Twenty-five millions of francs, in addition, spent on the commissariat and hospital stores, would have preserved the lives of 50,000 soldiers, and saved you, in the end, twenty-five millions." "If I had given them that sum," replied Napoleon, "*they would have robbed the troops of it, and things would have been just as they are.* My reverses have arisen from the defections of my allies; but for that, I would have made head against all my enemies. They have evinced a discreditable want of faith. There is a distinction between a man of honour, and a man of conscience: the former is greatly to be preferred, for he simply adheres to his engagements, whatever they are, and with whatever consequences attended; the latter makes his conduct depend on his intelligence and his judgment. My father-in-law, the Emperor of Austria, has done what he thought would be advantageous for the interests of his people; he is an honest man, a man

of conscience, but not a man of honour. You, for example, if the enemy, having invaded France, were on the heights of Montmartre, would think, probably with reason, that the safety of France obliged you to abandon me; you would, in so doing, be an honest man, a man of conscience, but not a man of honour." "These words," says Marmont, "pronounced by Napoleon on the 11th October 1813, have often since recurred to my mind as prophetic. Their impression never will be effaced from my recollection." [1]

[1] Marmont, v. 274-276.

14. The Emperor is obliged to change his plan by advices from Murat. Oct. 12.

That the Emperor's plan of carrying the war into Prussia was the best that in the circumstances could have been adopted, is evident from the consideration that, if coupled with an abandonment of the fortresses on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula, it would have enabled him to regain the Rhine with above 100,000 additional veteran troops, who, as matters stood, would, in the event of defeat, be all made prisoners of war. But how firmly soever he might be set on this project, he received, on the morning of the 12th, advices from Murat and Marmont, which compelled him to change his determination. During the course of the movement from Dresden to Düben, the Allied Grand Army had not been idle. Issuing in huge masses from the defiles of the Bohemian mountains, it had pressed hard on Murat in every quarter. He did everything which skill and courage could effect to retard their advance; but it was impossible that 50,000 men could hold their ground against 120,000. The Austrians continued steadily to advance. On the 7th, headquarters were at Chemnitz. On the 10th, the Allied advanced-guard, under Wittgenstein, advanced from Altenberg to Borna, and in so doing cut off Murat, who was marching on the same point from Frohburg. A severe action here ensued, Murat fighting with desperation to recover his natural position on the Leipsic road, between the Allies and that point. Although success was at first nearly balanced in the charges of the opposing horse, and the loss on both sides was about

CHAP. XI. 1813. Oct. 9. equal, yet the advantage, on the whole, remained with the French, who drove the Russians out of Borna, and regained possession of the Leipsic road, and their line of retreat to that place. On the night of the 9th, a detached corps under Prince Maurice of Lichtenstein and Thielman surprised Wetlau on the direct road between Leipsic and Mayence. The Allies, therefore, now stood on the French communications, right between them and the Rhine. And although Augereau, hurrying up with his corps of conscripts from Mayence, regained this important post on the day following, and, continuing his advance, entered Leipsic on the 13th, yet the Allied Grand Army was now advancing fast, in great masses, along the road from Chemnitz, by Borna, to Leipsic; while Giulay, with their extreme left, had entered Weissenfels on the direct road from Leipsic towards France, and made prisoners twelve hundred sick and wounded.

Oct. 10. Oct. 13.

15. Reasons for Napoleon's change of plan.

This intelligence of Schwartzenberg's continued advance, sent by Murat, and the accounts received from Marmont, who had ascertained, by a reconaissance, that Blucher was ascending the Saale towards Leipsic, established the following points: 1st, That the Grand Army was steadily advancing on Leipsic; 2d, That Blucher, far from retreating to the Elbe, had separated from Bernadotte, and was also moving on the same point. It was the second of these considerations which now determined his conduct. For the advance of Schwartzenberg on Leipsic he was prepared, *but not for Blucher's joining him there.* He had calculated upon both Blucher and Bernadotte being drawn back to the Elbe by his movement on their communications. Now, however, when he found that the army of Silesia would unite at Leipsic with that of Schwartzenberg, he felt that such a concentration would establish a force on his communications, which, even with the aid of all the garrisons on the Elbe, he might be unable to break through. He could afford to leave Schwartzenberg, but not Schwartzenberg, Blucher, and perhaps

Bernadotte, between him and the Rhine. This, combined with the general and loudly expressed desire of the army, left no doubt on the Emperor's mind as to the necessity of abandoning his project of hurling back Blucher and Bernadotte, and then returning, by Dresden or Torgau, from the right bank of the Elbe, to fall upon Schwartzenberg. With his wonted decision, accordingly, he at once changed his plan; and, countermanding the orders previously given to the corps of Reynier, Ney, and Bertrand, to march on the Elbe, he, on the forenoon of the 12th, wheeled his whole army about, and directed every sabre and bayonet on Leipsic, intending to establish himself there, between the Grand Army and those of Silesia and the North, and prevent their junction.[1]

[1] Vaud. i. 199, 200; Recueil de 1813, ii. 380; Bout. 103, 104; Vetter, i 154, 155; Thiers, xvi. 514-516.

16. Severe cavalry action at Borna on the 14th.

A reconnaissance, ordered by Schwartzenberg along the road from Borna towards Leipsic, led, on the 14th, to a brilliant cavalry action between the French and Wittgenstein's corps, which did equal honour to each of the contending parties. Three thousand of Murat's horse there encountered Pahlen's dragoons, and several splendid charges, with various success, were made on both sides. The ground was eminently favourable to a cavalry encounter, consisting of level meadows, presenting no peculiar advantage to either side. The cannonade on both sides soon became extremely loud, and under cover of it the opposing cavalry fought with alternate success. The action took place in the open plain between the Leipsic road and the wood of the University. The French cavalry, headed by Murat, attacked at first with the utmost vigour, and broke the Russian cavalry, who would have been cut to pieces but for a brilliant charge of a large body of Prussian cuirassiers, who assailed them in flank when in the heat and confusion of success, and in their turn routed the victors with great slaughter. In the course of this desperate *mêlée*, six regiments of French cuirassiers which had just arrived from Spain, and were among the best horsemen in the French army, were most

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severely handled, and nearly destroyed. In the pursuit which followed, Murat was closely chased by the enemy, and an officer who headed the chase, knowing the monarch by his white plume, repeatedly exclaimed, while almost touching him with his sabre, "Stop, king! Stop!" The Italian monarch's orderly at this moment saved his master's life by passing his sword through the pursuer's body; but the Allies were soon after brought up by a charge in flank from a fresh body of French horse. Although the success in the cavalry charges, however, was thus balanced, and the loss on either side was nearly equal, being about 2000 to each, yet the advantage on the whole remained with the French, for in the evening Wittgenstein retired to Espenhain, and Murat, with his whole force, about 60,000 strong, took up the ground he had chosen for making a final stand in front of Leipsic.[1]

[1] Bout. 106; Odel. ii. 18; Vetter, i. 160, 161; Thiers, xvi. 515; Cathcart, 293.

17. Inactivity of Bernadotte at Köthen.

While the armies of Bohemia and Blucher were thus converging on all sides around Leipsic, where Napoleon was fast concentrating his forces for the decisive struggle, the Prince Royal, with the Army of the North, held back at Köthen, neither co-operating in the general movement, nor doing anything to promote the object of the Allies. Blucher was at Halle on the Saale, to the north-west of Leipsic, where he had remained firm even when Napoleon had cut off his communications by the advance to Düben; but Bernadotte, who, on that event, had retired two marches to the rear to Köthen, remained there, even after the change of movement on the part of the French Emperor, on the 12th and 13th, had given unequivocal proof of a general concentration of troops at Leipsic. This immobility was sufficiently justified when the French legions were crossing the Elbe and menacing Berlin, but it remained without an intelligible, or at least an *avowable*, motive, when the movement in retreat on their part had commenced, and both parties were concentrating their forces for the decisive shock at Leipsic. This conduct on the part of the Prince Royal, which so painfully verified

all his predictions and realised his worst anticipations, did not escape the vigilant eye of Sir Charles Stewart, who respectfully but firmly represented to his Royal Highness that the enemy's movement on Leipsic was now clearly pronounced; that the reasons for any longer stay at Köthen had come to an end; and that, if he delayed any longer there, he would not only fail in the part assigned to him in the general plan of operations, but be deprived of any share in the grand and decisive battle which was approaching. To all these considerations, how just and obvious soever, his Royal Highness remained insensible; and instead of issuing orders to move towards Leipsic, he detached a division *towards the Elbe*, and gave directions indicating an intention of moving the whole army in the same direction. The altercation was animated, and at length became painful. Baron Witterstedt, minister of Sweden, and General Adlercreutz, were present, but took no part in the discussion. At length, with great difficulty, he got the Prince Royal to change his movement so far as to promise to move the bulk of his troops on Zörbig, which, although still thirty miles distant from Leipsic, was half a march nearer it than Köthen had been.*

* The following very curious and interesting account of this altercation between the Prince Royal and Sir Charles Stewart, is contained in a letter to Lord Castlereagh, on the 17th October:—

"SCHNECKDITZ, *October* 17, 1813.

"MY LORD,—I feel it an incumbent duty to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent's Government, to put your Lordship in possession of my candid sentiments on the Crown Prince of Sweden's late operations, and the part I have felt it my duty to take. It will be for your Lordship to judge whether I have outstepped the bounds of propriety. But an anxious observer and well-wisher to the success of the common cause could not reconcile it to himself, placed as I have been, and honoured with the confidence of my Government, of the Emperor of Russia, and the King of Prussia, to remain silent. I have no hesitation in declaring to your Lordship, that indisputable proof can be adduced by military authorities that if the Crown Prince had done his duty the whole of the French army engaged against General Blucher would have been destroyed. Of the Crown Prince's march across the Saale, his wishes intimated to General Blucher *to pass before him*, which threw the General on his right, and out of the general order of battle, and his attempt afterwards to force General Blucher to the left, as well as his management of the Swedes, I will not now speak, as you are in possession of the heads of these facts in a private letter. I shall commence

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18. Fall of the kingdom of Westphalia, and defection of Bavaria.

In addition to the pressing reasons already given, which induced Napoleon to abandon his project of crossing the Elbe and carrying the war into Northern Prussia, there was another circumstance which contributed to recommend the same course. Intelligence had now been received at the French headquarters of the crumbling to pieces of the throne of Westphalia under the strokes of the Allied par-

my observations from our position at Köthen, on the 14th, when General Blucher was at Halle. So soon as the information was certain that the enemy's corps which had passed the Elbe were retiring towards Leipsic, I waited on the Prince Royal, as I was in the habit of doing, on the evening of the 14th, and urged his Royal Highness to make a forced march and collect at Zörbig, having his advance towards Britenfeldt, Delitch, and Düben. I humbly expressed my opinion that, according to the dispositions from the Grand Army, and General Blucher's operations, if his Royal Highness did not cover the General's left, he might bear no part in the approaching contest. The Prince replied, '*Provided the French are beaten, it is indifferent to me whether I or my army take part, and of the two I would much rather they did not.*' This was stated to me in presence of many military men then at Köthen, and repeated next day at Sylbitz near Halle, before Baron Witterstedt and Baron Adlercruitz, who on this, as upon every other occasion, have expressed themselves as the most devoted and loyal individuals to the cause. His Royal Highness next observed, I wanted him to make a march, with his flank to the enemy, as at the battle of Eylau. I replied, that I humbly conceived, as all the bridges over the Mulda were destroyed, and its passage was so difficult that his Royal Highness had told me he would not pass it to attack, the enemy, I conceived, even if they were there, would not attempt its passage to attack him, especially with Blucher before them, and the Grand Army so close; that his Royal Highness had 60,000 men, a river to protect his flank on his march, on which he might throw an additional corps to his advanced-guard, during his movement, if necessary; but, above all, as we know the enemy were filing towards Leipsic, there could be no risk. After some more conversation, which I managed, I trust, with the utmost respect, he agreed to march to Halle. I urged that Halle was in rear of General Blucher, and if he was engaged, his Royal Highness could never reach him for support during the battle. His Royal Highness answered, he would be in second line, and ready to support, if necessary; and in his orders on the following day, of which I shall send you a copy, he directed his army 'to prepare *to follow the enemy if they are beaten*, and to do them all the mischief possible in their retreat,' evidently showing he did not intend to be in the action. I left the Prince Royal in the evening with a promise on his part he would change the direction of the march from Halle to the left on Zörbig, whither the troops were *en route* in the morning. Here I must beg your Lordship to observe, that my urgent proposition *was to reach Zörbig on the 14th*, which could easily have been achieved, as we remained two days at Köthen. Still I thought it would be something to get the army near Zörbig on the 14th, and I left Köthen with that impression. On the morning of the 15th I rode out with the Prince, and your Lordship may conceive my surprise when I found that, instead of directing his troops to the left to Zörbig, as he had promised, or even to Halle, he had marched the Swedes by Gröpzig, in the rear of Petersberg, towards Wettin; the Prussians to the Petersberg and Oppin; and the Russian corps with their left on

tisans, and the dangerous fermentation which prevailed over the whole of that kingdom and the adjacent provinces. And though the news of the defection of Bavaria, which took place on the 8th instant, and was known at the Allied headquarters on the 12th, did not reach Napoleon till the 15th or 17th, yet he was aware that such an event was probable, and even imminent; and that although the

Zörbig. The army was collected at Köthen on the 14th, and their obvious march to support General Blucher was *to their left and forward*, but his Royal Highness *directed them to the right, in rear of General Blucher, and backward*, making at the *same time an angle to the rear which nearly doubled their distance.* At Sylbitz, when the Prince Royal stopped to issue orders to the troops, I humbly but urgently requested it might be weighed whether the other armies would not complain of this movement, especially General Blucher. The Russian General Suchtelin, I am sorry to say, encouraged his Royal Highness in his opinion, and at length I was told that any one who recommended the march on Zörbig was 'un sot.' I bowed, and kept my temper, but said I was still not convinced. After some time, however, I had the satisfaction of finding the Russian corps ordered to Zörbig. Baron Witterstedt and General Adlercreutz were present at this discussion—the former will no doubt remember what passed. I must here observe, that the orders of this day, issued by the Prince Royal, were wilfully, for they could not be ignorantly, issued to the different corps to have *brigades formed towards the Elbe*, evidently to give the impression that the enemy was to be looked for in that quarter; and this was in spite of the information received from the lieutenant-colonel of the French état-major, which I communicated to the Prince Royal at Köthen, at 3 P.M. on the 14th (showing the orders to march on Leipsic).

"On the 16th, in the morning, being personally much dissatisfied with the Prince's proceedings, I repaired to General Blucher. All I had been able to accomplish by dint of the most urgent persuasion was to get the Russians to Zörbig. General Blucher naturally was most indignant at the Prince's conduct. The Prince could not plead ignorance; and wilful determination, either from jealousy of General Blucher or other causes, evidently operated to keep his troops away.

"I must not omit to mention, that at Syblitz the Prince Royal gave me his word that, in case General Blucher attacked the following day (16th), I might give the General his word that he would be on the ground, in the direction of Delitzsch and Eilenberg, with 8000 or 10,000 cavalry and light artillery, and support, even if his infantry could not arrive. This pledge I stated as given to me to General Blucher when I joined him. I wrote from the ground where General Blucher's dispositions were making, the following letter to his Royal Highness, which I sent by an aide-de-camp:—

"'*Le 6 d'Octobre, 9½ heures* A.M.

"'MONSEIGNEUR,—D'après le rapport de M. de Général Blucher l'ennemi a quitté Dolitsch. Il est de la première importance selon ses idées que l'armée de V. A. R. se porte à la gauche derrière Dolitsch; les marais et les defiles la mettent absolument hors de risque, et V. A. R. sera en état de prendre part au combat, qui sera plus decisive, avec votre armée et vos talens militaires. Comme toute la force de l'ennemi est dans les environs de Leipsic, permettez moi de vous observer que les momens sont precieux. La nation Anglaise vous regarde;

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King was faithful, and desirous to adhere to his engagements, yet it was more than doubtful whether he would long be able to withstand the united pressure of Austria on the one side, and his own subjects pining for the deliverance of the Fatherland on the other. Indeed, Na-

il est de mon devoir de vous parler avec franchise. L'Angleterre ne croira jamais que vous êtes indifferent pourvu que l'ennemi soit battu si vous y prendrez part ou non. J'ose supplier V. A. R. si vous restez en seconde ligne d'envoyer le Capitaine Bogue avec sa brigade de Roquetiers pour agir avec la cavalerie au Général Blucher. J'ai l'honneur d'être, etc., CHARLES STEWART, *Lt.-Genl.*' "

" I sent this letter by an aide-de-camp. General Blucher urged me strongly to go to H. R. H. myself to press the purport of it. I proceeded thither immediately, and on my way met an aide-de-camp of the Crown Prince, who stated that in consequence of my pressing solicitations, H. R. H. had consented to move with his advance (*the Russians*) to the left to Landsberg on this day; *the Prussians were a march behind them, and the Swedes a march behind the Prussians.*

" I, in vain, on arriving, sought the Prince; and not finding H. R. H., I stated to General Adlercreutz, who was at Landsberg, how indispensably necessary it was for the Russian cavalry and light artillery to advance immediately in the direction of Taucha, *that the Prince's word had been pledged to it.* The General said, if I could arrange it with General Winzingerode, he would answer for it with the Prince. I proceeded to this General (Winzingerode). His orders, he said, were so positive from the Emperor of Russia not to act but with orders from the Crown Prince that he could not move; but he could send 3000 horse forthwith, or 8000 the following morning, if I could procure the order. I returned to General Blucher in despair; but I have since learned that 3000 horse were pushed forward yesterday evening (16th) on General Adlercreutz's seeing the Prince, and they appeared on General Blucher's left this morning.

" After seeing General Blucher's action yesterday, being uncertain where to find the Prince Royal, I rode late at night to Halle, where I found Baron Witterstadt. I made him send an express to H. R. H., with the following letter, of which I send a copy, with the most earnest prayer to him to break up, and march immediately forward with the most advanced corps, not waiting for the rear. Baron Witterstadt's answer afforded me the satisfaction of knowing that, by repeated goading, the head of the Northern Army would have been in its place at noon this day (17th), if an attack had then been made.

" ' HALLE, 16 *Octobre*, 9 *heures de soir.*

" ' MONSEIGNEUR,—Je viens du champ de bataille du Général Blucher. J'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer les details de cette affaire. J'ose supplier V. A. R. de vous mettre en marche le moment que vous recevez cette lettre, et de vous porter sur Taucha. Il n'y a pas un instant à perdre. V. A. R. me l'a promis. C'est vous parler en ami. Je parle actuellement comme soldat; et si vous ne commencez pas votre marche vous vous en repentirez toujours. J'ai l'honneur d'être, etc., CHAS. STEWART, *Lt.-Genl.*' "

" Whatever may be the subsequent events, I think I have said enough. I am sure I can prove more than enough to show that if the Prince had barely done his duty, the corps of Marmont, Ney, and Bertrand would have been entirely

poleon went so far as to ascribe in the bulletins the retrograde movement to Leipsic, and all the disasters with which it was followed, entirely to the defection of that power. But this was a political falsehood, intended to throw, according to his usual custom, the responsibility for his own acts upon others; for, as already mentioned, the march on Leipsic was *begun on the* 12*th, and he only learned that the defection of Bavaria was certain on the* 15*th,* and that it had actually taken place on the 17th. But without doubt the knowledge he had of the pressure applied to that power must have contributed to strengthen him in his resolution to adopt that step. With the marshals this intelligence, when it was received, was still more conclusive, and added to the joy with which they turned their faces towards the Rhine. "By the inconceivable defection of Bavaria," said they, "the question is entirely changed. We must look forward to other defections which will follow. Wirtemberg, Baden, and Darm-

overthrown, and the serious losses in D'York's corps, by his timely arrival, would have been spared. A moment's reference to the map, and the detail of the positions, will convince your Lordship that if his army had marched on Zörbig on the 14th, or even the 15th, with its advance towards Delitsch, which the enemy evacuated that day, he would have been enabled to act on Ney's force, which filed from the neighbourhood of Düben and Delitsch on General Langeron's attack, and protected Marmont's right; and if an impression had been made and followed up to the Partha simultaneously with General Blucher's attack, the whole enemy's force must have been lost.

"Your Lordship is now in possession of a fair and candid detail of what has passed within my knowledge. I pledge myself for the facts therein stated. It is for the Prince Regent's Government to consider them, with all other accounts they may receive, in the manner their wisdom may think fit.—I have the honour to be, &c., "CHAS. STEWART, *Lt.-Genl.*

"*His Excellency* LORD CASTLEREAGH, &c."
(*Most secret and confidential*).—*MS.*

The substance of this very interesting and important letter is given in Lord Londonderry's *War in Germany*, pp. 160, 161; much *modified, however, and diluted*, as was proper when the actors in the scene were in great part alive. Now, however, that they are all gone to their rest, the time has come when historic truth must assert its permanent reign, and praise or blame be awarded to the actors on this mighty stage according to the merit or demerit of the parts they have respectively played on it. It is needless to say how large a meed of the former must be awarded to Sir Charles Stewart for his intrepid conduct on the occasion.

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stadt will be swept away by the impulse already so violently given to Southern Germany. The Austrian army, which was on the Inn, is doubtless already in march for the Rhine. The Bavarian army will follow it. They will draw after them the whole armed force which they find on the road; our position will be first menaced, then invaded. What can be so urgent then as to draw near to it?"[1] *

[1] Fain, ii. 377, 378; Bign. xii. 387; Thiers, xvi. 527-529.

19. Interesting conversation of Napoleon with his marshals on the evening of the 14th.

On the evening of the 14th Napoleon arrived at Leipsic, and Murat, Marmont, Berthier, and the other marshals and generals present, repaired to his headquarters to receive his instructions previous to the decisive battle which was expected. As the numerical superiority of the Allied to the French forces, if the former were all brought into the field, in the proportion of nearly three to two, was known to all, Napoleon's plan was to fall in the first instance on Schwartzenberg with 120,000 men, over whom, as he had no larger force, he anticipated an easy victory, and then to debouch against Blucher and the Crown Prince, the latter of whom he knew was

* The true secret of Napoleon's march on Leipsic, and the false motives to which he ascribed it in the bulletins, is thus explained by M. Thiers:—"Napoléon n'avait pas pu se porter sur Leipsic à cause de la défection de la Bavière, puisqu'il l'ignorait. On s'est fondé pour répandre cette fausseté, sur une assertion du *Moniteur* de cette époque, qui prétend que la défection de la Bavière avait contraint Napoléon de revenir sur Leipsic. On vient de voir par les preuves matérielles que nous avous rapportées, que l'assertion est radicalement fausse. Mais voici le motif de Napoléon pour dissimuler la vérité en cette circonstance. Cherchant pour le public une explication palpable de la manœuvre qui l'avait ramené sur Leipsic, et dont le résultat avait été si désastreux, *il imagina cette raison de la défection de la Bavière*, qui était frappante pour les ignorants, et qui lui servait à masquer ce qu'on pouvait croire une faute, comme pour 1812 il avait imaginé de dire que le froid était cause de nos malheurs, et pour Culm que Vandamme avait manqué à ses instructions. Mais Napoléon, en se justifiant ainsi devant les ignorants, se calomniait devant les gens instruits. Si en effet il eût été certain que la route de Mayence allait se fermer par la défection de la Bavière, c'eût été une raison de plus de descendre sur Magdeburg et Hamburg, au lieu de remonter sur Leipsic, puisqu'il se serait assuré ainsi la route bien meilleure et encore libre de Wesel. Mais Napoléon désespérant de faire comprendre à la masse du public comment il avait été forcé à la suite des plus savantes manœuvres de revenir sur Leipsic, adopta une assertion spécieuse, facile à saisir par tout le monde, et la donna dans les nouvelles officielles, aux dépens de la vérité et de sa propre gloire."—THIERS, xvi. 531, 532, note.

so far in the rear that he would be able to take no part in the engagement. To compensate his inferiority of force, whenever it could not be avoided by a rapid concentration of his troops on his interior line of communication, he proposed *to draw up his men in two lines instead of three,* alleging as a reason that the third line was of no real use, either for firing or charging with the bayonet. He supported his design to Berthier, Murat, and Marmont, who were present, by observing that such a formation would impose upon the enemy, and cause them to ascribe to the French a force a third greater than they really possessed. In the midst of this discussion, Augereau was announced, who had just come into line with his corps of recruits from Mayence. "Ah! here you are at last! Come, my old Augereau, we have been long expecting you:" he then added, but in a friendly tone, "But I fear you are no longer the Augereau of Castiglione." * "Yes," replied Augereau, "you will find me the Augereau of Castiglione, if you will give me back the soldiers of the Army of Italy." Napoleon took this retort in good part, and continued the conversation, censuring much the conduct of others, and laying the fault on every one but himself. "He complained," says Thiers, "of his brother Louis, who, from Switzerland, whither he had retired, asked him back Holland; of Jerome, who had just lost Cassel; of Joseph, who had recently been driven from Spain. He then added that his misfortune had been to do too much for his family; that his father-in-law, the Emperor Francis, had often told him so, and that he now saw it was true, though it was too late. 'Even you,' added he, turning to Murat, 'have been on the point of abandoning me.' 'I never was so,' replied Murat, 'but I have always been surrounded by hidden enemies, who have done everything in their power to prejudice me in your Majesty's eyes.' 'Yes! yes!' replied Napoleon, with a tone which showed that he knew or had divined

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* Alluding to his brilliant victory there in 1796 in the Italian campaign.

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all; but, smiling, 'you were ready to follow the footsteps of Austria; but I pardon you. You are good at bottom, and have a real friendship for me; and you are a brave man; but I committed a mistake when I made you a king. If I had been content with making you a viceroy like Eugene, you would have acted like him; but being a king, you thought more of your own crown than mine.' These words, pronounced in a friendly tone, produced a great impression, and the Emperor soon after took his leave with an affectionate manner, bidding them recollect that the morrow would decide their fate, his own, and that of France."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 533-535.

20. Position of the French and Allies.

The next morning (15th) early, Napoleon was on horseback riding over the ground which was to be the scene of the coming struggle. By the evening of that day all the corps of the French army (except those under Marshal Ney, who had to return from the banks of the Elbe) had either arrived or were approaching the environs of Leipsic. The position taken up by the French and Allied armies at the commencement of this the greatest battle of modern times, has been thus described by an intelligent and able eyewitness: "Marmont was in position at MÖCKERN, on the north of Leipsic, looking out towards Halle, where Blucher was concentrated, and Ney and Reynier were hastening from Eilenberg to fall in on his right, and the whole remaining disposable force of the French, under Napoleon and Murat, was assembled to the south of the same town, in the position of WACHAU and Liebertwolkwitz. Only certain posts, however, were regularly occupied; actual lines of troops were only formed partially when and where they were absolutely required. The line taken up by Murat on the 14th, and approved by Napoleon when he came up, extended from Liebertwolkwitz to the Pleisse, running at right angles to the latter river. The principal posts occupied were Dolitz, on the right, with its walled gardens and strong defensible ground; Wachau, in the centre, a village in a

hollow, with a small wood or orchard at one extremity, and, being itself commanded by rising ground on both sides, was a difficult post for either party to hold; lastly, Liebertwolkwitz, on the French left, a much better post and more considerable village, on the top of a hill which formed a regular glacis to it. A ridge ran all the way from the shoulder of the eminence of Liebertwolkwitz to the river Pleisse, passing in rear of Wachau, and commanding it. The position could not fail to present itself to the eye of an experienced officer as the only one which that uninteresting country afforded for the purpose of covering Leipsic towards the south. The distance of the centre of this line from the gates of Leipsic may have been about five English miles, and its extent from right to left about three and a half."[1] The disposition of the army which occupied it was as follows: Poniatowski, on the right, held Dolitz, Mark-Kleeberg, and the banks of the Pleisse, with Kellermann's cavalry on the plain to his left; Victor, in the centre, occupied Wachau; Lauriston, on the left, guarded Liebertwolkwitz; beyond him stood Sebastiani's horse; while on the extreme left Macdonald was every instant expected to debouch from Holzhausen. Augereau was in rear of Poniatowski on the right; Napoleon in person, with the Guard and Latour Maubourg's cavalry, took post behind Victor in the centre; Bertrand's corps was in Leipsic, and Margaron's division away on the left bank of the Elster, occupying Lindenau. "To the north of Leipsic, where Marmont's force was posted, the French held the village of Lindenthal as an advanced post; but his own corps, forming his centre and left, was placed in an advantageous position, two miles farther back, having its left on the Elster, near Möckern, and its right at Euteritzsch. He occupied both these villages, and there his principal force was assembled, as they covered the whole approaches to Leipsic from the north. He had also placed in position, though they were not movable, from want of horses, forty pieces of marine

[1] Cathcart, 299.

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artillery that had been adapted for field service and left at Leipsic. His right wing, consisting of Dombrowski's division, sent by Ney, was detached to the right, and occupied another well-chosen position at Widderitzch, covering the Delitsch road. The cavalry of Arrighi, Duke of Padua, was with the right wing, which Reynier and Ney were expected to join; but in the morning neither had yet joined him, though they did in the course of the battle."[1]

[1] Cathcart, 311, 312.

21. Forces on both sides.

The forces of the opposing armies on this occasion were very unequal, if they had been all brought simultaneously into action; but the backward policy of Bernadotte, which kept his force, 60,000 strong, out of action, took away the superiority which otherwise would have existed on the Allied side, and reduced the forces on either side as near as possible to an equality. The French Grand Army, under Napoleon in person and Murat, consisting of the corps of Poniatowski, Victor, Lauriston, Augereau, and Macdonald, with Kellermann and Milhaud's cavalry and the Guards and cuirassiers in reserve, mustered 115,000 combatants, of whom 18,000 were horse, with 500 pieces of cannon.* The army of the Allies, opposed to this mass to the south of the town, consisted of 131,000 men, of whom 25,000 were cavalry, with 620 guns.† This force was on the ground entire, with the exception of Klenau's corps, of nearly 10,000 men, who was detached five miles to the extreme right; but, on the other hand, Benningsen and Colloredo's reserves had not yet come up; but they might be expected on the day following with 48,000 men, of

* "Ainsi dans la première journée Napoléon avait pour la bataille qui allait se livrer au sud de Leipsic 115,000 hommes à opposer aux 160,000 de Schwartzenberg. Si li lutte s'engageait en même temps au nord, il avait à opposer aux 60,000 hommes de Blucher Marmont avec 20,000, Bertrand avec 10,000, sans compter les 10,000 de Margaron qui gardaient Leipsic et la grande route du Rhin."—THIERS, xvi. 542.

† "The Allied force actually in the field thus amounted to 131,000 men, and the total moving from Bohemia upon Leipsic to 179,000 men. . . . The enemy had about 130,000 in the field, and Buonaparte commanded in person."—WILSON, ii. 166.

whom 3000 were horse, with 130 guns. To the north of Leipsic, Ney's whole force—including Marmont at Lindenthal (20,000), Bertrand in Leipsic (10,000), and Souham, Reynier, and Dombrouski on the march (35,000)—numbered 65,000 combatants, with a reserve of 10,000 at Lindenau under Margaron; but they were opposed to 120,000 under Blucher and the Crown Prince, if their forces were all brought up. But as the latter had kept his army so far back that it could not possibly take a part in the approaching action, his entire army was to be deducted from the attacking body, which left the opposing forces in that quarter as nearly as possible on an equality. But, on the other hand, as Souham and Reynier had not come up at the commencement of the action, and Bertrand was obliged to hasten to Lindenau, the numerical superiority throughout the day was largely on the side of the Allies, and the stubborn resistance they there made in the highest degree honourable to the French soldiers.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 542; Vaud. i. 202-204; Kausler, 932; Plotho, ii. 340; Jom. iv. 449.

22. Description of the town of Leipsic.

There was one peculiarity, however, in the position of Leipsic, in a military point of view, of the very highest importance, and which was the cause in the end of the most frightful disasters to the French army. *It had only one line of retreat, and that a narrow defile through marshes nearly two miles broad.* The town itself is of no great extent, and is surrounded, like most German towns, by an old wall, forming nearly a square. It consists of a half-ruined curtain of masonry, covered by a ditch, in most places almost obliterated, without a counterscarp. The suburbs, which stretched much farther out, were also at their extremities shut in towards the south and west by walls, and the gates in them defended by palisades; but towards the north-west, on the side of the Partha, they were entirely open. To the south-east, on the road to France, the city is bounded by the marshes of the Pleisse and the Elster, which descend from the Bohemian mountains, and, lazily flowing through swampy mea-

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dows, wholly impassable for carriages, form a barrier two miles across, against the passage of an enemy. This broad belt is traversed by a *single road*, that to Lützen and Mayence, which enters the city over a bridge across the Elster. There were no other arches over that river, except one or two wooden ones for foot passengers, save this stone bridge, over which the great road passed, well known from the fearful catastrophe which occurred at it a few days after. Thus Napoleon, with a force inferior by at least sixty thousand men to the collected mass of his enemies, chose a battle-field with no other retreat passable for horsemen, artillery, or carriages, but a single road traversing a single arch; a selection the more extraordinary in a general who has laid it down as "the first duty of a commander never to fight with a defile in his rear."[1]

[1] Bout. 161; Fain, ii. 383; Capefigue, ix. Introd. 15; Thiers, xvi. 546-550.

23. Schwartzenberg's address to his troops.

At midnight on the 15th, two rockets were sent up to a prodigious height from the headquarters of Prince Schwartzenberg, to the south of Leipsic, which were immediately answered by three, two of a blue and one of a red light, to the north. These signals announced to the assembled multitudes that all things were in readiness, and that the battle of giants was about to begin. At one in the morning an animated proclamation, signed by Schwartzenberg, was issued and read at the head of every company in the army.* Great was the ardour which it awakened in the Allied ranks: joyfully the men looked to their swords and tried their flints, nothing doubting they were preparing for a decisive victory. Confidence pervaded every bosom: every heart beat high with hope,

* "Braves guerriers! L'époque la plus importante de la sainte lutte est arrivée; l'heure decisive vient de sonner: preparez vous au combat. Le lien qui réunit les plus puissantes nations pour un et même but, va se resserrer sur le champ de bataille. Russes, Prusses, Autrichiens! vous combattez pour la même cause—pour la liberté de l'Europe, pour l'independance, pour l'immortalité. Tous pour un! et un pour tous! que ce soit votre cri de guerre dans ce saint combat: restez lui fidèle dans le moment decisif, et la victoire est à vous.

"CHARLES P. SCHWARTZENBERG."

—LONDONDERRY, 168.

Recent success, present strength, seemed the sure presage of victory. No proclamation was issued to the French troops; no heart-stirring address animated the spirit of the men. All was still in their lines. Their watch-fires burned with a steady light, and no moving figures around their flames indicated an intention to retreat in the morning.[1]

[1] Lond. 168; Thiers, xvi. 547-549; Capefigue, x. 218.

24. Commencement of the battle of Wachau. Oct. 16.

All things being in readiness, three guns were fired at eight o'clock from the Allied headquarters, and immediately a tremendous cannonade commenced on both sides. The Allies at all points made the attack. They advanced preceded by two hundred guns, to which the French replied with three hundred, arrayed along their whole line. Kleist, with the left wing, attacked and carried Mark-Kleeberg on the Allied left, while Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, with the centre, marched against Wachau, and made himself master of a portion of it and of a small wood adjoining. At the same time Prince Gortschakoff, with the right, marched against Liebertwolkwitz, and Klenau, on the extreme right, advanced to support this attack; but as Gortschakoff had a considerable distance to march before he reached the enemy, the attacks were not made simultaneously, and after some success Klenau was obliged to retire. The success which he at first gained, however, had the effect of inducing Napoleon, who, from his position at the elevated sheepfold of Meitsdorf, beheld all, and with reason regarded Liebertwolkwitz as the key of his position, to bring up half the Young Guard, under Mortier, to the support of Lauriston, to whom the defence of that part of the position was intrusted. This accession of strength enabled Lauriston to repulse Klenau, and he drove him back in such a direction as effectually disunited him from the remainder of the line. By this advantage, Liebertwolkwitz was effectually secured; and as Macdonald was now coming up from Holzhausen, Napoleon, deeming his own left safe, was enabled to turn his attention to the centre and right of his line.[2]

[2] Cathcart, 302, 303; Lond. 169; Thiers, xvi. 551, 552; Bout. 113; Odel. ii. 19, 20; Vaud. i. 206.

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25. Battle at Wachau in the centre.

This was the more necessary that the advance of the Allies in that quarter had been attended with considerable success. Victor in the centre was hard pressed by Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, and it was with difficulty that he maintained himself in Wachau against the impetuous attacks of the Russians. To support him, Napoleon brought up two divisions of the Young Guard under Oudinot, who entered the village, situated, as already mentioned, in a hollow, and the reserve artillery of the Guard was placed on the heights behind so as to play on the columns of the enemy descending to the attack. The Emperor Alexander, who from the opposite heights watched the progress of the attack, feeling the force in the centre inadequate to forcing the village of Wachau, sent to Schwartzenberg for the support of Prince Eugene, and after some delay Bianchi's division was ordered up to his assistance. Meanwhile, in the French right centre, between Wachau and Mark-Kleeberg, Lewachoff's Russian cuirassiers had cut to pieces a body of Kellermann's dragoons, and the French cavalry reserves had to be brought up before his progress was checked. Kellermann then, however, gained possession of the level ground to the French right of Wachau, and being supported by Augereau's infantry, brought up from the second line, threatened to separate the Allied centre from their left. Napoleon, who designed to make his principal attack on the Allied centre, now directed Victor and Oudinot to debouch from Wachau upon Prince Eugene, while Lauriston and Mortier were to drive back Gortschakoff from Liebertwolkwitz, and eighty guns of the Guard, under Drouot, placed in battery between the two, were to connect and cover the attack. Victor and Oudinot assailed Prince Eugene with such an overwhelming force that he was obliged to retire over the hill on his rear to the farm of Auenhayn, where the reserve, under General Raeffskoi, was placed, who immediately came to the front and gallantly stopped their further advance. The retreat to

Auenhayn, however, though conducted with the steadiness of which the iron veterans of Russia alone are capable, was attended with very heavy loss; upwards of a thousand dead lay upon the field, and double that number of wounded fell into the hands of the enemy. The battle seemed gained, for the French were established in great strength not only in the centre but beyond it, and Napoleon, deeming the victory secure, wrote to the King of Saxony that he was entirely successful, and had made two thousand prisoners.[1]

[1] Cathcart, 304, 305; Odel. ii. 21, 22; Vaud. i. 205, 206; Bout. 114; Loud. 159.

26. Great advantages gained by the French in the centre.

And in truth it was gained, if either the Allies had been less active in bringing up forces to supply the chasm made in the centre, or Napoleon had had ten thousand additional men in hand to secure his advantages. Schwartzenberg, seeing his centre so nearly forced, brought up his whole reserve, under Prince Hesse Homburg, which, in spite of the remonstrances of the Emperor Alexander and General Jomini, had been stationed on the western side of the Pleisse, far from the decisive point, to support the menaced part of the line. This force at length arrived at Grobern, behind Mark-Kleeberg, where Kleist still, though with great difficulty, maintained himself. The Allied army now formed a new line, still turning on the pivot of Mark-Kleeberg, and slanting from that point behind Wachau, through Auenhayn and Gossa, till it rested on the wood of the University, in the rear of Liebertwolkwitz, from which Gortschakoff had of necessity been driven back by Lauriston and Mortier, after the centre was forced at Wachau. In every part of the field except Mark-Kleeberg, the line was forced back, and the French occupied all the posts which had been held by the Allies at the commencement of the action. Klenau was with difficulty holding the head of the wood of the University far in the rear of Liebertwolkwitz;[2] Gortschakoff was defending to the last extremity the other side of the University wood and the village of Gossa, while Prince Eugene and Raeffskoi stood fast at the sheep-farm of

[2] Cathcart, 305, 306; Jom. iv. 456-458; Bout. 116; Plotho, ii. 384-386; Thiers, xvi. 555-559.

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Auenhayn, and the French cavalry were rapidly traversing every part of the field of battle, and collecting prisoners at every step.

27. The Allies are further worsted in the centre.

Napoleon, who saw his advantage, now deemed the decisive moment arrived, and he made every arrangement to turn it to the very best advantage. He collected the Old Guard in front of the space between Gossa and Auenhayn, which was the weakest point of the enemy's line; he placed the artillery of the Guard, under Drouot, in front, the cavalry behind them, and the infantry in heavy masses in rear; while, on either flank of the guns, Victor and Oudinot on the right, Lauriston and Mortier on the left, stood ready to advance and establish themselves in any aperture which the artillery fire might make in their front. Raeffskoi's grenadiers, with artillery in the intervals of regiments, were immediately moved to the menaced point near Auenhayn, and the French artillery of the Guard, advancing to within musket-shot, began firing with the utmost violence at the Russian line. Raeffskoi's men came down like scales of walls under the terrible discharges, but the soldiers instantly closing to the centre filled up the gaps as fast as they were made, and still presented an invincible front to the enemy. The farm of Auenhayn was at last carried for a moment by Dubreton's division of Victor's corps; but no efforts of Lauriston could dislodge the Russians from Gossa. The Allies still held an eminence in the open ground on the extreme left of the French, called the Swedish Redoubt, where the bones of the warriors of Gustavus Adolphus reposed. Macdonald, who had now come up from Holzhausen, was engaged in the attack on this point. Napoleon, who rode up to the spot, attracted by the violence of the fire around the eminence, seeing a regiment of infantry at the foot of the redoubt, asked what regiment it was, and being told it was the 22d light, he said, "That is impossible;[1] the 22d light would never remain there to be massacred by grape-shot, without rushing on the artillery

[1] Thiers, xvi. 560, 561; Cathcart, 306; Odel. ii. 331; Fain, ii. 397.

which was destroying them." Stung by this reproach, the regiment sprang up, and at a run carried the redoubt. This advantage gained, Macdonald pressed on, entirely turned the Allied right, drove back Klenau, and made himself master of the wood of the University.

28. Grand cavalry attack on the centre.

Napoleon had now gained a very great advantage in almost every part of the line, and he resolved to push it to the uttermost. For this purpose he brought forward the enormous mass of cavalry which on so many previous occasions had proved decisive of victory. Twelve thousand horse, fresh and hitherto untouched, advanced to the charge in two columns, one on the Allied right, and the other on their left centre, where their line seemed least supported. The attack on the right centre, between Auenhayn and Gossa, is thus described by a gallant eye-witness, himself engaged in the affray: "At this moment the enemy's cavalry, of which we could count fifty squadrons, were standing in formidable array on the shoulder of the hill of Liebertwolkwitz. A small brook or drain ran from Gossa towards the Pleisse, and in rear of the place where two Russian regiments of horse had taken post. Its banks were swampy, and could only be passed with difficulty, and a leap across a wide drain, unless by causeways made in two or three places by the farmers for agricultural purposes. The cavalry on the hill proved to be the whole corps of Latour Maubourg, amounting to upwards of 5000 horse; Murat had taken the command, and began to descend the hill, directing his attack upon the two Russian regiments at its foot. The French advanced in line of contiguous columns of regiments; certainly in one body only, with no second line or reserve. The narrowness of the front to be attacked, as well as the nature of the ground, caused this powerful force to crowd into one dense mass before it came in contact with the Russian dragoons; these were overwhelmed and driven across the swamp or over the causeways. Many of the rearmost were killed, but the rest

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rallied as soon as they had crossed the brook. The lancers, who were in second line, retired by their left to another causeway, but did not cross it, and formed again. But the enemy themselves were unexpectedly checked by this unforeseen obstacle; their crowding and confusion increased; and at that moment the Russian regiment of hussars of the Guards, which Wittgenstein had sent to take part with the rest of the brigade, appeared in their rear.[1]

[1] Cathcart, 307, 308; Thiers, xvi. 561, 562.

29. Which is repulsed with great loss.

"This caused a panic. The unwieldy mass of the enemy became noisy, and attempted to retire. The Russian light cavalry instantly followed them. The Emperor Alexander, who stood on an eminence about two hundred yards in the rear of the stream, took the opportunity to detach his own escort, consisting of several squadrons of the red Cossacks of the Guard, under Count Orloff Denisoff, who crossed the stream at a favourable spot near Gossa, and took the retiring mass in flank. This completed the panic. The retreat soon became a flight, and the fugitives did not draw their bridles till they had regained on the hill the protection of their infantry.* Latour Maubourg had his thigh carried away by a cannon-shot, which disabled him for life. Murat was in great danger of being taken, and six guns fell into the hands of the Cossacks. Thus 5000 of the French cavalry, led by Murat in person, were foiled by an insignificant obstacle. They were seized with a panic; and for want of a second line on which to rally, and from which to take a fresh departure—a precaution without

* "About three o'clock the enemy, observing that the Russian reserve was at a great distance in the rear, advanced two considerable masses of cavalry, and charged through the centre of the Russian line; several Russian regiments of cavalry took panic, fled, and abandoned the infantry and several batteries. Happily the infantry stood firm. Already the enemy's horse had reached the rear of the advanced position, and began to cross the dyke which passed over a marsh in this part of the field, when the Cossacks of the Guard and the Russian reserve cavalry charged forward, obliged the enemy to a rapid and destructive retreat, and restored the fortune of the day."—WILSON, ii. 169.

which no cavalry attack ought ever to be made—they were obliged to abandon their enterprise, and fly before a force of light cavalry which altogether could not have amounted to 2000 men." So far did the successful Russian cavalry penetrate in pursuit, that they surrounded Drouot's artillery of the Guard, which *formed a square of artillery*, discharging with extreme violence on all sides.[1] *

[1] Cathcart, 307, 308; Bout. 116, 117; Vaud. i. 207; Fain, ii. 399.

30. Close of the battle, and its results.

Seeing how rudely the corps of cavalry on his left had been handled, Napoleon did not push home with that on his right. The cuirassiers of the Guard and the dragoons of D'Espagne, however, charged along with Kellermann, and broke the cuirassiers of Lewachoff; but they were in their turn checked and driven back by the Austrian cuirassiers of Nostitz, which formed the head of Bianchi's reserve, which at this critical moment came into action, and the close volleys of whose infantry completed the repulse of this formidable body of horse. At the same time the light infantry of the Russian Guard, under Yermaloff, was moved forward to Gossa, where a powerful infantry attack was made by Lauriston, which, at first successful, was repulsed at last with great slaughter by the Prussian division of Pirsch, reinforced by the Russian Guard. In rear of the extreme French right, Meerfeldt with his Austrians had forced the passage of the Pleisse, attacked

* Thiers gives a precisely similar account: "A distance le village de Gülden-Gossa ne laissait voir que quelques touffes d'arbres; mais de près Murat y trouva un grand enfoncement de terrain, et dans cet enfoncement des bâtiments, des bouquets de bois, des mares d'eau, et derrière chaque obstacle de l'infanterie bien postée. Arrivée sur le village, sa cavalerie fut obligée de s'arrêter court, et de demeurer en ligne sous le feu. L'Empereur Alexandre consentit alors à ce qu'on fit charger tout ce qui lui restait sous la main, jusqu'aux hussards et Cosaques de sa Garde. Ceux-ci passant entre les ouvertures praticables de Gülden-Gossa, dont les Russes étaient encore maîtres, se jetèrent à l'improviste sur la flanc de la cavalerie de Murat, qu'ils surprirent, et qu'ils obligèrent à se replier n'emmenant que six des vingt-six pièces conquises tout à l'heure. Le brave Latour Maubourg eut la cuisse emportée par un boulet. Ces hussards et ces Cosaques, lancés au galop, entourèrent de toutes parts la grande batterie de la Garde qui était restée inébranlable au milieu du champ de bataille. Drouot, rabattant alors les deux extrémités de sa ligne de canons sur ses flancs, opposa pour ainsi dire un carré d'artillerie à la cavalerie ennemie."—THIERS, xvi. 563.

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and carried Dolitz, and caused such a panic, that Napoleon had to direct thither a division of his Old Guard. They, however, soon drove the Austrians over the river with the loss of their general, who was taken prisoner. This success encouraged Schwartzenberg to order a general attack on the whole line; but it was too late to communicate it in time, and the order was countermanded. When night put an end to the contest the Allied left was still at Mark-Kleeberg, their centre at Auenhayn, and their right at Gossa. The French retired to the ground they had held before the battle, and with reason claimed the victory, for they had driven back three-fourths of the Allied line to a position considerably in rear of that on which they originally stood. The losses in this terrible battle had been enormous; that of the French is admitted by Thiers to have amounted to 20,000 men,* and that of the Allies was as great.† But though success was thus nearly balanced, or rather inclined to the side of the French, yet the advantage really remained on the side of their opponents, for with them a nearly drawn battle was equivalent to a victory. Napoleon was so situated that nothing but a decisive success could extricate him from his difficulties. Next day the arrival of the Prince Royal with his whole army, and Benningsen and Colloredo with the Russian and Austrian reserves, would add 100,000 men to the Allied standards.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 564-566; Cath. 309; Bout. 118, 119; Plotho, ii. 379; Fain, ii. 401.

* "Cet acte fut le dernier de la bataille du 16, bataille terrible, dite do Wachau. Environ vingt mille hommes de notre côté, et trente mille du côté des coalisés, jonchaient la terre, les uns morts, les autres mourants. . . . Maison, au fin de la bataille, en dehors de Gülden-Gossa, comme un lion rugissant, privé des cinq sixièmes de sa division, couvert lui-même de blessures, et désolé d'être arrêté par la nuit. Le matin il avait dit à ses soldats ces nobles paroles, 'Mes enfants, c'est aujourd'hui la dernière journée de la France; il faut que nous soyons tous morts ce soir.' Ces enfants héroïques avaient tenu son engagement. Il n'en survivait pas un millier."—THIERS, xvi. 566.

† "The action ended at night, when both parties occupied nearly the same position. The loss of the Allies was not less than 20,000; and such had been the carnage at particular points, that Prince Eugene of Würtemberg's division lost 144 officers and nearly 4000 men killed and wounded, out of 6000."—WILSON, ii. 169.

This will be the more apparent when it is considered what at the same time had been passing to the north of Leipsic, where Marmont, with a much inferior force, was barring at Möckern the approach to the city of the impetuous Blucher at the head of the Army of Silesia. That gallant general, finding that nothing could bring the Prince Royal into action, resolved to attack alone; and, in consideration of his strenuous efforts to bring up Bernadotte, he gave Sir Charles Stewart, who had joined him in the morning, the command of the cavalry in reserve. In the narrative of this battle we have the advantage of a very distinct account by that officer in his letter to Lord Castlereagh on the day following: "General Blücher found the enemy's forces, consisting of the 4th, 6th, and 7th corps of the French army, and great part of the Guard, under Marshals Ney and Marmont and Bertrand, occupying a line, with their right at Freyrode and Radefeld, and their left at Lindenthal. The country is open, and very favourable for cavalry operations around these latter villages, but the enemy were strongly posted in a wood of some extent in front of Radefeld, and behind it the ground is more broken; but, generally speaking, it is adapted for all arms. The dispositions of attack of the Silesian Army were as follows: The corps of General Count Langeron was to attack and carry Freyrode and then Radefeld, having the corps of General Sacken in reserve. The corps of General D'York was directed to move on the great chaussée leading to Leipsic until it reached the village of Lutyschena, then, turning to the left, it was to force the enemy at Lindenthal, while the Russian Guards and the advanced-guard were to press the enemy on the main road to Leipsic. The corps of General St Priest, arriving from Merseburg, was to follow the corps of Count Langeron. The formation of the cavalry and the different reserves was made on the open ground between the villages.

"It was nearly mid-day before the different corps were

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32. Battle there, in which the French are worsted.

on their ground, and hopes were entertained that the cavalry and horse-artillery of the Prince Royal would come up. The enemy on the first onset gave up the advanced villages, and retired some distance, but tenaciously held the wooded ground on their right, and the villages of Gross and Klein Widderitzch, and also those of Möckern and Mockau on their left. At Möckern a most bloody contest ensued; it was taken and retaken by the corps of York five times; the musketry fire was most galling, and this was the hottest part of the field. Many of the superior officers were either killed or wounded; but at length the victorious Army of Silesia carried all before them, and drove the enemy beyond the Partha. In the plain there were several brilliant charges of cavalry; the Brandenburg regiment of hussars distinguished itself in a particular manner, and, supported by infantry, carried a battery of eight pieces.* The enemy made an obstinate resistance also on their right in the villages of Gross and Klein Widderitzch and Seehausen, and in the woods around them; and when they found that their left was forced, they brought an additional number of troops against Langeron, who was at this time warmly engaged with Ney's corps, which had just come up from Düben.† However, the Russians, equally with

* Sir Charles Stewart had the good taste not to mention it in his despatch, but he headed this charge.

† Marmont gives the following account of this part of the battle: "L'ennemi, ayant réussi dans son attaque à emporter la village de Möckern, fit avancer son centre. Le combat port alors une nouveau caractère. Nos masses et celles de l'ennemi furent se rapprocher les uns les autres, et pendant le long temps que jamais chose pareille ne s'était offert à mes yeux. Je pris avec moi le 20e et 23e provisoires, commandés par les Colonels Maury et Drouhot, et je les mene à la charge. Bientôt moins de cent cinquante pas séparerent de l'ennemi. Arrivés à cette distance nous rétrogrâmes, mais après avoir fait quelques pas nous nous arrêtâmes et fûmes à notre tour rétrograder l'ennemi. Cet état des choses dura près d'une heure. Alors le régiment d'artillerie de la marine placé à rang droit engage également de près avec l'ennemi vint se plier. Le 32e lèger se porta en evant et arrêta momentanément l'ennemi; mais en ce moment six mille chevaux vinrent nous envelopper et attaquerent de toutes parts. Il fallût se retirer sur la troisième division, qui avait peu combattu et dont les echelons nous recueillerent, et arrêterent le combat. La nuit arrivée est mit fin à le combat — un du plus chaud, un du plus opiniâtres,

their brave allies in arms, made the most gallant efforts, and they were entirely successful, night only putting an end to the action. After this, and during the retreat of the French, the Russian cavalry acted in the most brilliant manner in several charges. General Kolp's cavalry took a battery of thirteen guns, and the Cossacks of General Emanuel five. After this the enemy drew off towards Siegeritz and Pfosen, and crossed the Partha, retreating at all points. Among the Russians, General Chinchin and several officers of distinction were killed or wounded, and I estimate General Blucher's loss at 6000 or 7000 men. But the glorious Army of Silesia added another victory to its list, and the brow of its victorious leader was again decorated with a fresh laurel. Forty pieces of cannon, 12,000 killed or wounded, of whom 2000 were prisoners, one eagle, and many caissons, were the fruits of the victory of Radefeld and Lindenthal."[1] *

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Oct. 17, 1813, MS.; Cath. 311-313.

Such was Sir Charles Stewart's account of the battle, in which he bore so honourable and distinguished a part; and as it was written next day, and he was with Marshal Blucher's staff during the whole engagement, it is worthy of every credit, as far as his own side was concerned. Indeed, the French accounts of the day are substantially the same, with this difference, that they show, what was unknown to Sir Charles when he wrote this account of it, that Marmont's whole force in the field consisted, till a late hour, of his own corps and Dombrowski's division alone; Marshal Ney's corps (now under Souham) not having come up till the victory was decided in favour of the Allies. During the greater part of the day Marmont combated with 25,000 men against more than double that

33. French account of this battle.

qui aient jamais été livrés. Les troupes y monteront la plus grande valeur Si les Wirtemburgeois avaient fait leur devoir, un succès complet aurait été le prix de nos efforts."—MARMONT, v. 286, 287.

* Sir Charles Stewart's estimate of the enemy's loss was too high. It amounted to 4000 killed and wounded, and 2000 prisoners—much the same as the loss of the Allies; but the number of prisoners and guns taken, as well as the possession of the field of battle, gave them an unquestionable right to claim the victory.—*See* PLOTHO, ii. 388, and CATHCART, 313, 314.

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number of the best troops in Europe; and at the time the Allies attacked he was, in obedience to Napoleon's orders, actually retreating from his original position, in order to march with his whole corps to his monarch's assistance at Wachau. This caused the advanced villages to be abandoned at once; but, finding he could no longer draw off, he took post between Möckern and Entzritzch to meet the Allied attack, while Ney sent Dombrowski's division to Widderitzch to cover his right. This circumstance renders this battle, though unsuccessful, highly honourable to Marshal Marmont and the troops he commanded. Their loss, according to his own admission, was 6000.* None of the troops of the Prince Royal took any part in the action. It is evident that if the Prince Royal had done his duty, or even kept his word pledged to Sir Charles Stewart, the French army, immediately in front, must have been totally destroyed, for the force assailing them would have been doubled. As it was, the success of the Allies was mainly owing to this, that Souham's corps, which Ney had ordered up from Düben in time to have been present from the beginning of the battle, was intercepted by Napoleon on its march, and directed towards Liebertwolkwitz, which order was countermanded when he heard how hard pressed Marmont was, but not in time to allow his men to arrive on the field till the contest was decided. Thus this important corps, as D'Erlon afterwards did at Quatre Bras, spent this eventful day in marching and countermarching, without being of real use to either army. During this double battle Bertrand's corps had crossed the Elster to the support of Margeron at Lindenau, and driven back Giulay's Austrians.[1] †

[1] Bout. 120, 121; Fain, ii. 406; Richter, ii. 237; Thiers, xvi. 572; Marm. v. 288.

* "Mon corps d'armée perdit de six à sept mille hommes. Le seul corps d'York, d'après les relations officielles, dont les evaluations sont probablement inférieures à la verité, eprouva une perte de 5467 hommes."—MARMONT, v. 289.

† "J'avais du compter sur le troisième corps de l'armée, mais le Maréchal Ney en avait disposé *par l'ordre de l'Empereur, et l'avait dirigé sur la Grande Armée.* Napoléon, informé de mon engagement, lui envoya l'ordre de rétrograder, mais déjà il était près de lui. Il se mit cependant en mouvement pour

"This battle of the 16th," says Marshal Marmont, "decided the fate of Germany. We fought that day to preserve our command of it; to liberate it from our domination was the object of the Allies. It remained only to combat for our individual safety. When, therefore, writers fix on the 18th as the day when the decisive battle was fought, they are in error. It was on the 16th that the great question was decided. Napoleon having not succeeded in beating the enemy, and I having been obliged to combat one against four, even when the Army of the North, 60,000 strong, had not yet entered into the line, and the army of Prince Schwartzenberg being about to receive on the 17th powerful reinforcements under Benningsen and Colloredo, there was nothing more to be done. Our means were used up; our ammunition consumed; our corps half destroyed. We had no longer, therefore, anything to hope, and our sole thought should have been to effect our retreat in good order, to save our *débris*, and to regain France. Nevertheless the day of the 17th passed over in tranquillity. We were engaged only in restoring order to our troops. We should from the first moment have commenced our retreat, or at least have prepared so as to effect it at the commencement of the night. But a sort of inexplicable *insouciance* and fatality, difficult to conceive, seized upon Napoleon, and gave the finishing-stroke to all our calamities."[1]

34. Decisive importance of this battle.

[1] Marm. v. 289, 290.

It was during this battle that Sir Charles Stewart wrote the first of the letters which has been quoted in the secret despatches to Lord Castlereagh of the 17th, and after it was over that he wrote the second, and rode over at nine at night, at Blucher's particular request, to his

35. Sir Charles Stewart's discord with the Prince Royal.

réunir, sans pouvoir arriver à temps pour nous secourir, et pendant cette journée decisive, *ayant toujours marché d'un armée à l'autre, il ne fut utile nulle part.*" —MARMONT, v. 238. It is a very curious circumstance that the decisive battle of Leipsic, and the still more decisive campaign of Waterloo, were determined against Napoleon by the same unusual circumstance of an entire corps in both cases—Ney in the first, D'Erlon in the second—marching and countermarching, under Napoleon's orders, from one army to the other, without rendering any aid to either.

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headquarters to enforce the requisition contained in it personally. Bernadotte, who had promised to Sir Charles Stewart, on the 14th, that he would advance his troops on the next day by his left to Zörbig to aid Blucher, had only moved the Russians in that direction, and marched the rest of his army on the Peterberg and Oppin to their right rear—by so doing increasing, not diminishing, his distance from the Prussian marshal. On the road to his headquarters, Sir Charles Stewart met an aide-de-camp of the Prince, who stated to him that he had, in consequence of his pressing solicitations, agreed to move the Russians to the left of Landsberg on that evening; but the Prussians were a march behind, *the Russians and the Swedes one more behind the Prussians.* In despair at this intelligence, which proved too clearly that the Prince was about to take no part in the decisive battle which was expected on the following day, Sir Charles went on to his headquarters and requested to see him personally; but as this could not be attained, he wrote the letter already quoted at half-past nine at night, couched, it must be admitted, in terms rather suited to the frankness of a soldier than the flattery of a courtier, and to which royal ears are little accustomed. It had, however, the desired effect. The Prince Royal saw that his system of procrastination and holding back could no longer be maintained, and Sir Charles had the satisfaction of learning that the head of the Northern Army, should an attack on the Allies be made, would be in its place at noon on the following day.[1] They were at hand accordingly on that day, but *the Swedes were still a day's march in rear*, and took no part in the great battle of the 18th. Well may Sir George Cathcart say, "The remarkable manner in which the Swedish contingent happened to find itself placed out of *reach of harm, on this and all other occasions during the war*, certainly bears more the appearance of design than of chance."[2]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Londonderry, Oct. 17, 1813, MS.

[2] Cath. 317.

Sir Charles Stewart did not see the Prince Royal on

the 17th, as he was engaged all day with General Blucher in making the arrangements for the renewal of the battle on the 18th. But on the morning of the latter day, having been sent by General Blucher over to the Prince's headquarters, he was desired by the aide-de-camp in attendance to walk in, and he there met the Prince, who was in a towering passion, and reproached him in warmest terms for the letters he had written to him on the 16th. "What, General Stewart!" said he—"what right had you to write to me as you did? Have you forgotten that I am Prince of Sweden, one of the first generals of the age? If you were in my place, what would you think of any one who should dare to write to me as you have done? You are not accredited to me: it is owing to my friendship that you are here, and the only return you have made is to give me all this pain." Sir Charles answered in the most respectful tone, and confessing that his zeal might have carried him too far, but referred to recent events as a proof that his views as to the movements of the French had been well founded. By degrees the Prince was mollified, and he concluded at length, in a good-humoured way, "Well! do you really wish that we should be friends? Why not discuss military matters with me in an amicable way? Tell me your thoughts openly, but I beseech you do not again write to me." Sir Charles assured him of his anxious wish to assist the Swedish nation, but that he could never see their chief depart from what he knew were the true interests of his situation, without remonstrating boldly. The Prince, upon this, took his hand, assuring him of his friendship; they discussed the principal features of what had passed, and he kindly invited him to dinner two days afterwards, to meet the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia, he being the only minister present.[1] *

36. Sir Charles Stewart's stormy interview with the Prince Royal on the 18th.

[1] Lond. 177-179.

* "LEIPSIC, *October* 21, 1813.

"MY LORD,—The hurry in which I despatched Mr James, precluded me from giving your Lordship an account of some occurrences with the Crown Prince of Sweden since my last despatch, No. 115, was written. I feel it essential to dis-

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37. Both armies are inactive on the 17th.

Both hosts remained in a state of inactivity on the 17th; the French reorganising their army after so desperate a shock, the Allies awaiting the powerful reinforcements under the Prince Royal, General Benningsen, and Count Colloredo, who were expected to come up in the course of that day. The French showed some large masses of in-

guise nothing from you at this moment in regard to H. R. H., inasmuch as I am firmly persuaded that nothing but the most vigilant and constant watching will impel H. R. H. to that line of conduct which he is called upon to perform.

"On joining the Prince, on the morning of the 18th, from General Blucher at Breitenfeld, when dispositions were making for the attack, the general officers being with H. R. H., the aide-de-camp in waiting desired me to go into the room. On entering I was somewhat surprised to find the Prince come up to me with a look and countenance of fury. He took me to a window and addressed me, as nearly as I can recollect, as follows, but purposely in a low tone of voice, so that others might not hear it. 'Comment, Général Stewart! Entrez chez moi sans vous faire annoncé! Quel droit avez-vous de m'écrire? Ne rappellez-vous que je suis le Prince de Suède, un des plus grands capitaines de l'âge? Si vous étiez à ma place, que penseriez-vous si quelqu'un vous écrivait comme vous m'avez écrit? Vous n'êtes pas accredité près moi; c'est par amitié que vous êtes ici, et vous m'avez donné beaucoup de peine.' As soon as H. R. H. had finished, I answered in the most respectful manner: 'It is possible my zeal may have carried me too far, but to my own conception I could not repent one step that I had taken. I had urged the march to Zörbig, and reluctantly he had consented to it in part. I implored the forward movement to Landsberg, and H. R. H. adopted it. After General Blucher's victory on the 16th, it was my letter and prayers that made your R. H. break up, at two in the morning of the 17th, so that the head of the army is now up. Your Royal Highness may judge whether I was mistaken. The whole circumstances were known to the staff, his Ministers, and the principal officers of the army. I desired to be judged by Baron Witterstedt and General Adlercreutz and the result. I had never been deficient, to my knowledge, in respect to him; but it was beyond endurance, after acting as I had done, instead of receiving one kind word of thanks, to be met with displeasure. It is true, I was not accredited to H. R. H., but I was charged with the interests of Great Britain in the north; England paid his army, and my reports whether the army did its duty, or was withheld from it, might have an effect H. R. H. was not aware of. I was incapable of the vanity of placing my military opinions on a level with those of H. R. H., but I was not quite inexperienced, and it required very little discrimination to perceive that all our late movements were evidently departing from the combinations and dispositions of the armies; H. R. H. might recollect his own words to this effect. This was not a moment for concealment; I should speak my opinion openly and respectfully, but firmly; I never should shrink from any duty in the most painful circumstances, which, I confessed, after listening to H. R. H., this appeared to be.'

"His countenance during my speech had changed, and become quite calm, and he replied, quite in another manner: 'Eh bien! voulez-vous que nous soyons amis? Vous savez, mon ami, l'amitié que je vous porte. Pourquoi ne pas causez ensemble de nos dispositions? Dites moi vos pensées, mais ne

fantry on the high ground between Liebertwolkwitz and Wachau, and the cavalry of Latour Maubourg was displayed in one extended line, as it had been the day before; but they stood on the defensive merely, and seemed to be disinclined to commence the attack, which the Allies, as



m'ecrivez pas: je vous en prie en grâce.' I assured H. R. H. I was honoured by his friendship, when I considered that he was acting as became him, that if he was displeased with my letters I would write in future to General Adlercreutz, although his own invitation on my first arrival had led me rather to address him; my anxious efforts were to assist H. R. H., but I never could see him depart from what I knew were his own interests, without remonstrating, trusting it would be in a becoming manner. Upon this, he took my hand and assured me of his friendship. He went over the dispositions of the battle, and I have been favoured with great attention by him since. He asked me yesterday to dinner to meet the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia, being, I believe, the only minister present.

"However distressing all this has been, and however disagreeable it is for me to state it, still it is indispensable that your Lordship should know all that has passed, and I shall request his Majesty's minister at the court of Stockholm, to whom I shall give the perusal of this despatch, to obtain from Baron Wetterstedt and General Adlercreutz their opinions on the line of conduct I have adopted throughout all this trying period, and I beg to be judged by them. I feel this the more necessary, as the Prince Royal might prejudice me in those quarters where it is naturally my ambition to stand highest. I will fairly avow to your Lordship, one kind word would recompense me for using my ardent exertions throughout these operations. But when the Prince has acted so unhandsomely by me, as he did at the conversation I have detailed, it is for me to do myself justice, and to call for those opinions which I flatter myself will be at least satisfactory to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent and his Government.—I have the honour to be, &c., CHAS. STEWART, *Lt.-Genl.*"

In the following very curious letter the same opinion is still more energetically expressed after the battle of Leipsic:—"I am nearly dead with fagging, my dearest Castlereagh, and oppressed with a bad cold, so I shall add nothing of public events to my despatch, sent by Mr James. The news is so glorious, I can scarce think of it with common ideas. But Bernadotte is a terrible cheat, and quite artificial. Rely upon what I say, I cannot see a man in battle without seeing a little into him. Though I say it that should not say it, I feel conscious that if I had not been here the Northern Army would have played no part before Leipsic, and the Grand Army would have been beat on the 16th. I have thought it right, for fear of misrepresentation, to give you my opinions, and the conduct I have adopted officially; I am willing to be judged of, if he complains of me, by the data I can produce. However, he is as subservient to me as need be; he knows I can show him up, and therefore fears me. He has been made to play his part, however; and perhaps he is an instrument we may yet need; but I wish we were not to be the means of confirming his powers, when he has done more than enough to lose it for ever. Write to me, dearest friend, and give me some comfort, as I have had hard and ungrateful work, and I hope not to be disapproved of. Kiss my dear boy for me.—Ever, in great haste, your most devoted, C. S."

"*To* LORD VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH."

(*Most secret and confidential.*)—*MS.*

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Benningsen and Colloredo were close at hand, had no wish to force on prematurely. Early on the morning, Napoleon, according to his usual practice, mounted on horseback and rode over the field of battle, accompanied by Murat, Berthier, and Count Daru. Many as had been the similar scenes of horror which he had witnessed in the course of his life, this exceeded them all. The French dead bodies lay in long rows as they had combated on the field of battle, but those of the Allies did the same; and those of the Russian Guard, in particular, who had stopped the charge at Auenhayn, were found in regular array, "with their back to the field, and their face to the foe." The scene was melancholy in the extreme. The troops evinced none of their wonted enthusiasm at sight of the well-known imperial cortège. No cries of "Vive l'Empereur" were heard. With downcast looks, and weltering in their blood, they lay on the ground, breaking the mournful silence only by cries for water or surgical aid, which was not to be had. Gloom pervaded every visage, despair had seized on every heart. All felt that their efforts were in vain, and that the decree of fate had gone forth for the deliverance of Germany, and their own expulsion behind the Rhine. Ere long Napoleon dismounted, and after walking about for some time in silence among the dead bodies, he was the first himself to pronounce the word "RETREAT"—a word which was on every lip, but before him none had ventured to utter.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 577, 578; Cath. 318, 319.

38. Extreme difficulties of Napoleon's situation, and negotiation with Meerfeldt. Oct. 17.

Yet though his resolution, which, in truth, was unavoidable, was taken, it was no light matter to adopt it; and never, perhaps, was so terrible a sacrifice imposed on a sovereign as this measure implied. It involved not only the abandonment of Germany; the loss of the prestige of glory which had so long encircled the French arms; the relinquishment of the supremacy which France had for long exercised in European affairs; but, what was still more painful, it involved the ultimate surrender of the whole fortresses on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula; and with

them of a hundred and seventy thousand veteran troops composing their garrisons, of whom a hundred and twenty thousand were excellent soldiers ready for the field. It was heartrending to think of such a multitude of prisoners being the trophies of a single battle; their loss might endanger the independence of France itself.* It is not surprising that Napoleon underwent a fearful mental strife, and hesitated long before he adopted a resolution fraught with such tremendous consequences. Yet, situated as he was, it appeared to be unavoidable, for the other alternative seemed to be still worse—that of being surrounded by an overwhelming superiority of force, and obliged to lay down his arms on the open field. In this perplexity it was with the most lively satisfaction that he learned that Count Meerfeldt, who was a military man of great talent and address, with whom he was intimately acquainted, had been made prisoner on the preceding day. At two in the afternoon of the 17th, he ordered him to be brought before him, hoping by his intervention to extricate himself from his difficulties by opening a negotiation with the Allied powers.[1]†

[1] Thiers, xvi. 562, 581; Burghersh's War of 1813-14.

* "Battre en retraite, c'était donc à l'aveu d'une défaite ajouter une perte irréparable, perte qui était la suite d'une immense faute, celle d'avoir voulu garder jusqu'au bout les éléments d'une grandeur impossible à refaire, perte enfin désolante, quelle qu'en fût la cause. On ne peut blâmer Napoléon d'avoir consumé en affreuses perplexités la journée du 17, sans juger bien légèrement les mouvements du cœur humain. Se déclarer soi-même vaincu dans une rencontre générale, abandonner tout de suite 170,000 Français laissés dans les places du Nord, sans quelques heures de méditation, de regrets, d'efforts d'esprit pour tâcher de trouver une autre issue, était un sacrifice qu'il serait peu juste de demander à quelque caractère que ce soit. . . . . Il y avait dans le nombre bien des malades, bien des éclopés, mais il était possible d'en tirer 100,000 à 120,000 soldats excellents, qui, se joignant à ceux qui restaient, rendraient invincible la frontière du Rhin. Pourraient-ils se grouper, et former successivement une masse qui sût se rouvrir par Hamburg et Wesel le chemin de la France."—THIERS, xvi. 579.

† Baron Fain, in his very interesting Memoirs, has assigned as the date of this conference with Meerfeldt, the 16th, at ten at night; and the Author, following his authority, has assigned the same date for it in his *History of Europe*, chap. lxxxi. § 44. Lord Westmoreland, however, since the accomplished British ambassador at the Court of Vienna, then attached to the Allied headquarters, has given the conference its true date—viz., 17th, at two P.M. The latter date is accordingly adopted by Thiers, xvi. 581, 582. The reason of

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39. Napoleon's conversation with Meerfeldt on a peace.

"Were the Allies aware, when they commenced the attack yesterday, that I was present personally on the field?" said Napoleon, when Meerfeldt was brought up. "They were," replied the Austrian. "Then you wished to engage in a general battle?" said Napoleon. "We did," rejoined Meerfeldt, firmly, "because we were desirous to bring this long struggle to a termination by a decisive battle." "But you deceive yourself as to my forces," resumed Napoleon: "how many men do you suppose that I have?" "A hundred and twenty thousand at most," replied Meerfeldt. "You are mistaken," resumed Napoleon, "I have above two hundred thousand; and how many have you?" "Three hundred and fifty thousand," replied Meerfeldt.* "I did not think you had so many; the contest is becoming very serious," answered Napoleon. "Are there no means of coming to an understanding? Can we not think of making peace?" "Would to God that your Majesty would incline to it!" exclaimed Meerfeldt; "we seek for no other object from all our efforts. We combat only to conquer a peace. Your Majesty, if you had been so inclined, might have had it at Prague two months ago." "At Prague," answered Napoleon, "they did not act sincerely with me; they sought to envelop me in a fatal circle, which is a mode of proceeding I am not accustomed to. England did not wish for peace; and England led Russia and Prussia, as she will lead Austria. It is for the Cabinet of Vienna to labour for the establishment of peace if she really wishes it." "I speak without authority," rejoined Meerfeldt, "as I have no accredited mission; but I am convinced that England is sincerely desirous of peace, and stands much in need of it; and that if France would only consent to make the sacrifices which

the erroneous date given by Fain evidently was to account for Napoleon's inaction during the 17th.

* Both parties, for very obvious motives, were here greatly exaggerating their respective forces, immense as they were on both sides. On the morning of the 18th, however, the Allies had a great superiority; for the Allies had in all, on the north and south of Leipsic, 270,000; the French, only 180,000.

the happiness of the world and of France herself requires, peace would be concluded to-morrow." "Sacrifices!" exclaimed Napoleon, "I am ready to make them. Let England restore to me my colonies, and I will give her back Hanover." "That, I fear, will not suffice," said Meerfeldt. "If so," replied Napoleon, "I will go farther; *I will restore the Hanse towns.*"

40. Concluded.

Had the last words been uttered at the congress of Prague, peace would at once have been concluded; but now it was too late. The Allies had since that time obtained immense advantages; their present position promised them still greater, and they were resolved to make the most of them. M. de Meerfeldt, therefore, expressed the opinion of the coalesced Cabinets when he said, "If peace is to be made, I suspect your Majesty must consent to abandon Holland." "If Holland," replied Napoleon, "is taken from me, it will fall under the power of England, in whose hands it will become a fresh means of establishing a maritime despotism in favour of that power. I know well England desires to compel me to limit the number of my vessels of war." "If you pretend," replied M. de Meerfeldt, "to join to the already vast shores of France, those of Holland, Spain, and Italy, there is no maritime power which could equal yours; it might then be necessary to stipulate for some restriction on your vessels of war; but your Majesty, so justly tenacious on points of honour, will doubtless consent to some territorial sacrifice of countries which you do not require rather than submit to a condition, the very idea of which, I well know, must be to the last degree painful to your mind. Why not abandon Westphalia, Holland, and Italy; you can do so without the latter falling under the dominion of Austria?" Napoleon professed himself ready to make even these sacrifices, but insisted, as a preliminary, that they should conclude an armistice.* "I will not insist personally on

* Meerfeldt gave Sir R. Wilson the following account of Napoleon's conversation: "He proposed, on the condition of an armistice during negotiation,

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that condition; for I know you say an armistice is part of my tactics. But much blood has already been shed, and more will soon be so. Let us, then, all retire a little; the Russians and Prussians behind the Elbe; the Austrians to the Bohemian mountains; the French behind the Saale: we shall thus let poor Saxony breathe, and can quietly direct the conditions of peace." "The Allies," replied Meerfeldt, "will never agree to an armistice on these conditions, for they hope this autumn to advance to the Rhine." "Do they expect me to retire to the Rhine?" exclaimed Napoleon; "that I shall never do till I have lost a battle, which I have not yet done. I may possibly do so, for the fate of arms is uncertain; no one knows it better than you do, M. de Meerfeldt, for you came to implore peace from me at Leoben, and after Austerlitz; but that misfortune has not yet happened to me, and until I have lost a battle, I shall not retreat to the Rhine. Depart! I give you your liberty on your parole; it is a favour which I willingly accord to your merit, and to our old relations;[1] and if what I have said to you can be of any service in leading to a negotiation,

[1] Thiers, xvi. 585-587.

to evacuate Dantzic, Modlin, Stettin, Cüstrin, Glogau, Dresden, Torgau, and even Wittenberg; but he made some difficulty as to this latter point. He further agreed to go beyond the Saale. He said, as to terms of peace, that if England would make peace and give up colonies, he would give up Hanover, Lubeck, and Hamburg; that if she would agree to the neutrality of the flag, the independence of Holland might be arranged, and Italy be made an independent monarchy. He hesitated as to the restitution of Mantua to the Austrians, and repeated that Italy must be kept entire. Meerfeldt said that the Allies might object if Murat was to be the sovereign. He replied, that it was not necessary to anticipate the arrangements. He again and again, however, declared that he did not believe that England would make peace, or, at least, without a condition to which he would never submit—limitation as to the number of his ships of war. Meerfeldt asked him if he would give up Erfurth at this moment, as well as the other fortresses. He hesitated. Meerfeldt then said that the resignation of the protectorate of the Rhine Confederation was necessary. Buonaparte answered that it was impossible; but on being told that *Bavaria* had withdrawn from his protection (*with which he was unacquainted*, the courier from Munich having been taken), and that the other states were negotiating, he said, 'Then the protectorate of the Confederation ceases, *de se*.' Spain being mentioned, he observed, 'It was a question of dynasty—*Je n'y suis plus*—thus that question is decided.' He was inquisitive about the point on which the Bavarians were to act. Meerfeldt told him 'On that which would be most injurious to him.'"—WILSON, ii. 171, 172.

or, at least, to a suspension of arms, you will find me disposed to enter into negotiations." *

These overtures were communicated to Lord Cathcart on the field the same day as the British ambassador, by Meerfeldt's express desire. Sir R. Wilson, who met Meerfeldt as he left the French lines, wrote out, under a heavy fire of shot and shell, a summary of the important intelligence, which he despatched by his aide-de-camp to Lord Aberdeen, who not being found, it was delivered to Sir Charles Stewart, who lost no time in communicating it to his Government, by whom he was specially thanked, "for his extreme vigilance and valuable intelligence." † They were laid before Schwartzenberg and the Allied generals, but they were too well aware of the advantages of their position to fall into the snare. They, therefore, returned for answer, that the proposals would be communicated to the Allied powers, and considered by them; but, in the mean time, that no suspension of arms could be granted. These events led to the basis of the negotiations afterwards opened at Frankfort. In the afternoon Schwartzenberg held a council of war in the village of Lestowitz, and after ascertaining that Benningsen could not reach Naunhof till night, that Colloredo had not yet arrived, and that nothing certain had been heard of the Army of the North, it was resolved to postpone the attack till the following day. Colloredo came up at four in the afternoon, and was stationed at Grubern. Benningsen reached

41. Which leads to no suspension of hostilities, and the battle is postponed till next day.

* Sir George Cathcart gives exactly the same account of the nature of Napoleon's proposals—viz., that he himself should retire behind the Saale, the Russians behind the Elbe, and the Austrians into Bohemia; adding, that he would not retire to the Rhine till he had lost a battle. He concurs, however, with Fain and Odeleben, in making the interview take place on the night of the 16th, and says they were communicated to Lord Cathcart next morning.—CATHCART, 320.

† Sir R. Wilson was much hurt at this intelligence being sent to England by Sir Charles Stewart, and his being thanked on the occasion instead of himself. But there is no foundation whatever for this complaint; for, as Sir Charles sent on Sir R. Wilson's memorandum in that officer's own handwriting, and initialed by himself, as it appears in his diary, there was, and could be, no concealment of the original source through which the information was derived.—*See* WILSON'S *Diary*, ii. 173, 174.

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Naunhof that night; and before morning it was known that some cavalry, the advanced-guard of Winzingerode's corps, forming part of the Army of the North, had arrived at Taucha, so as to be in communication with Blucher. Orders were given, therefore, for a general attack on the following day, and messengers were despatched to the Prince Royal and Blucher regarding their co-operation in the enterprise.[1]

[1] Cathcart, 319, 320; Wilson, ii. 173, 174.

42. The Crown Prince is at length brought forward.

Although, however, the advanced-guard of the Crown Prince was thus at length approaching the scene of conflict, it was not without very great difficulty, and the united exertions of all around him, that the Army of the North had been brought thus far forward, or put in a position to take any part in the approaching battle. On the night of the 16th he slept at Landsberg, and at two in the following morning, in consequence of the pressing remonstrances of Sir Charles Stewart, he broke up, and, marching slowly, on the night of the 17th he had reached Breitenfeld, still in the rear of Blucher, and about five miles distant from Leipsic. The Prussian general, how zealous soever and desirous to be ever in the front, felt the necessity of committing his lukewarm associate to a more advanced position, and insisted that his troops, fatigued as they were with the battle on the preceding day, were not so well qualified to sustain a conflict as those of the Army of the North, which had not yet fired a shot, and that they should cross the Partha and begin the action to the east of Leipsic. The Crown Prince, however, still maintained that the Army of Silesia should retain its position in the front; and upon this Blucher was so irritated that he declined the proposal of a personal conference. During the course of the day, however, various occurrences took place which altered the Prince Royal's determination. Sir Charles Stewart continued his efforts to bring him forward, and in these endeavours he was zealously seconded by Prince William of Prussia and Count Pozzo di Borgo, the accredited minister of the Emperor of

Russia, and an ardent supporter of his interests. The Swedish officers of his own staff, too, whose hearts were warmed by the approach to the field of fame, where the bones of their fathers, the companions of the great Gustavus Adolphus, reposed, and whose imaginations had been fired by the accounts of the desperate passage of arms on the same ground on the preceding day in which they had borne no part, united their efforts to those of the foreign ministers, and implored him to give the Swedes, second to none in Europe for martial spirit, their deserved share in the approaching conflict. Baron Wittersted and General Adlercreutz were particularly zealous in these representations, and their position, as the heads of the party which had placed him on the steps of the throne, could hardly be disregarded by the Crown Prince. Above all, Bernadotte himself was aware that the battle of Germany had been fought on the preceding day; that the French eagles of necessity must soon retire behind the Rhine, and therefore that there was little worldly wisdom even in irritating the victor in the hour of his triumph. Influenced by these considerations, the Crown Prince at length relented, and agreed to take a part in the approaching conflict. Blucher in his turn was, or feigned to be, mollified, and a conference between the two commanders took place at nine at night, at which a joint plan of operations for the succeeding day was agreed upon.[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvi. 590, 591; Lond. 162-170; Die Grosse Chron. i. 845.

During the whole of the 17th Napoleon remained in-

* "Nous citons le passage suivant de M. de Wolzogen qui peint ce qui se passait aux états-majors de Blucher et de Bernadotte. Les récits de M. de Muffling, témoin oculaire, sont encore plus frappants et plus amers.

"'Le Prince Guillaume, frère du Roi de Prusse, avait déjà auparavant décidé le Prince qui hésitait, à prendre une part sérieuse à la battaile, et avait amicalement éveillé son attention sur ce point, que l'opinion des troupes Prussiennes et Russes qui se trouvaient dans son armée lui était très-défavorable, et qu'elles allaient même *jusqu'à douter de son courage personnel* et de sa loyale volonté d'agir efficacement dans l'intérêt de la cause commune des Alliés. Cette confidence, ainsi que les observations du Général Adlercreutz, chef de son état-major général, que les Suedois, loin de rester en arrière, désiraient au contraire soutenir leur ancienne renommée sur le champ de bataille où Gustave-Adolphe avait combattu si glorieusement, passent pour avoir exercé une influence décisive sur la resolution de Charles-Jean.'"—THIERS, xvi. 591, note.

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active, and apparently undecided what course to adopt until he received an answer to his proposals for an armistice, transmitted through Count de Meerfeldt. Strange to say, he made no attempt during the course of the day to throw additional arches over the branches of the Elster, though he well knew there was only one bridge over them, leading to a defile, two miles long, across the marshes formed by that river, and that ten such bridges would hardly have sufficed for the retreat of an army of 180,000 men, with 800 guns, and chariots in proportion. This was the more extraordinary, as during the day his position was hourly becoming more critical, and the probability of his being overwhelmed by the increasing masses of the enemy every minute greater. Towards evening heavy columns were seen approaching on the road to Dresden, and Schwartzenberg's lines were visibly dispersing and extending, telling that the reserves of Benningsen and Colloredo were joining the Allied ranks, and would take part in the action on the day following. At eight, large masses were seen approaching Leipsic from the north, and at ten at night news arrived that Bernadotte had reached Breitenfeld, and might be expected to join Blucher next morning. Still the French Emperor made no dispositions whatever to facilitate his retreat through this perilous defile, though 280,000 of the best troops in Europe were soon to be thundering in close pursuit in the event of defeat. Apparently he was awaiting the result of his proposals for an armistice, transmitted through Count de Meerfeldt, and unwilling to take any steps indicating an intention to retreat in such critical circumstances. Or, possibly, the mighty conqueror could not bring himself, for the first time in his life, to retire after a pitched battle before his enemies, and preferred all the chances of ruin to the open acknowledgment of defeat.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 585, 587; Vaud. i. 211, 212; Bout. 128, 129; Jom. iv. 464-466; Plotho, ii. 388-390; Odel. ii. 30, 31.

At length, however, this state of indecision could no longer be persisted in. Midnight came, and still there

was no answer to his proposals transmitted through Count Meerfeldt. Then, and not till then, the Emperor finally resolved upon a retreat; but it was not to be one by stealth, or by gaining a march upon the enemy, but in open day, and in presence of their united hosts. At two in the morning of the 18th his final dispositions were made. These were, that the whole army was drawn back about a league from its former position, and arranged in a new one, forming a semicircle around Leipsic about two miles in diameter, having one flank resting on the Partha and the other on the Pleisse, which formed the base, as it were, of the semicircle. This position might be regarded as a great *tête-de-pont* to cover the bridge of Lindenau over the Pleisse and the Elster, the sole line of retreat to the army, and which must be maintained at all hazards. This new position, which everywhere faced outwards, extended from Connewitz on the extreme right, through Probstheyda and Stötteritz, which were all strongly occupied by Murat's army, to Paunsdorf, Sellershausen, and Schönfeld on the left, which last village was on the Partha, on which side, as well as on the northern suburbs of Leipsic, an attack from the united forces of Blucher and the Crown Prince, who had at last come up, might be expected. Victor's corps, with those of Lauriston and Macdonald, retired in the night from the advanced position, between Wachau and Liebertwolkwitz, which they had occupied since the 16th, through Holzhausen, to Stötteritz and Probstheyda, which villages they were enjoined to defend to the last extremity. Augereau and Poniatowski took up the line from Probstheyda to Connewitz. The Guard fell back to the environs of Leipsic. Marmont's corps was drawn back to a narrow front extending from Schönfeld to Sellershausen, while Ney and Reynier, who had now come fully up from the side of Düben, completed the circle by Paunsdorf, where they joined the extreme left of Murat's army. To Bertrand, with 18,000 men supported by two divisions of the Guard,

Napoleon's final dispositions for the battle.

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was intrusted the important duty of clearing the bridge of Lindenau over the Elster, and securing the line of retreat for the army towards Lützen. Dombrowski's division held the line of the Partha from Leipsic to Schönfeld. After deducting the men lost in the battle of the 16th, the French had not more, including those who had since come up, than 160,000 men in line on this eventful day; and of these 6000 were Saxons, upon whose fidelity in the approaching crisis, it was already known, no reliance could be placed. Thirty thousand of this force, moreover, was under Bertrand, or in the two divisions of the Guard supporting him; so that, for the shock on the field, the Emperor could not rely on more than 130,000, with 780 guns. Napoleon's intention was, if the Allies did not attack, to withdraw his army slowly and gradually during the course of the day. The position of the French army around Leipsic, with its flanks secured from being turned by the Elster and the Partha, and its front so contracted as in some degree to compensate its numerical inferiority to the enemy, having the old walls of the town itself as a great *tête-de-pont* to cover the retreat in its centre, was undoubtedly strong, and hardly capable of being forced, when defended by the force which Napoleon had now collected upon it. But it had one frightful defect, that of having but one line of retreat for the immense number of men, guns, horses, and chariots, collected in so small a space, in the event of disaster. Thus Napoleon, who had achieved brilliant success at Friedland in consequence of the Russians having fought there with the river Alle, traversed by only two bridges, in their rear, committed the same mistake on a greater scale himself, in the decisive battle of Leipsic.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 591-593; Cathcart, 322-325; Bout. 128, 129; Vaud. i. 211, 212; Jom. iv. 464-466.

45. Allied dispositions for the battle. Oct. 18.

Schwartzenberg, on his side, made the following dispositions. The Allied Grand Army, reinforced now by the entire reserves of Benningsen and Colloredo, about 48,000 strong, was divided into three columns. That on the right, of which Benningsen received the command, composed of his own troops, Ziethen's Prussians, and Klenau's Aus-

trians, mustering in all 35,000 sabres and bayonets, received orders to advance from Holzhausen against Murat's left, between Stötteritz and Engelsdorf. The centre, under Barclay de Tolly, which assembled near Gossa, consisted of Kleist's Prussians, with the exception of Ziethen's division, which was in the right wing, Wittgenstein's Russians, and the reserves of the Russian Guard, cavalry and infantry. It consisted of 45,000 effective men, and was to advance on Wachau, and thence to attack Probstheyda, the key of the French position, and where the greatest resistance was to be expected. The left column, composed chiefly of Austrians, under the command of the hereditary Prince of Hesse Homburg, which mustered 25,000 combatants, was to advance along the right bank of the Pleisse upon Dösen and Dolitz, while General Lederer, with an Austrian division, was to advance on Connewitz along the left bank of that river. Thus the attack of the Allied Grand Army was to be made by about 116,000 men. To the north, the armies of the Crown Prince and General Blucher were divided into two wings. The former, under Bernadotte, consisting of his own troops, with Langeron's Russians from Blucher's army, having crossed the Partha, was to advance from Taucha against Ney and Marmont, who covered the approach to Leipsic by the Wittenberg road; while Blucher, with the corps of Sacken and York, was to remain on the north of that river, and drive the enemy before him into the suburbs of Leipsic. Care had been taken to distribute the troops of the different corps and nations in this manner in order to excite mutual emulation, and divide equally either the glory of triumph or the disgrace of defeat. The entire forces of the Allies were 260,000, after taking into account the heavy losses sustained on the 16th, which had been not less than 25,000 men; and they had the enormous number of 1385 guns—fully 600 more than the French, who had only 780.[1]

[1] Cathcart, 327, 328; Thiers, xvi. 599-601; Die Grosse Chron. i. 865; Plotho, ii. 388-390; Jom. iv. 164; Lond. 169.

At two in the morning, after all his orders had been despatched, Napoleon mounted on horseback, and pro-

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46. Napoleon's nocturnal visit to Ney.

ceeded towards the north, to have a conference with Marshal Ney, in his quarters at Reudnitz. He found the Marshal *asleep in his tent*, a trait characteristic of the imperturbable *sang froid* of the bravest of the brave. The ride to Reudnitz was deeply melancholy; the horizon, on every side except the west, was lighted up by the bright flames of the enemy's bivouacs; they seemed surrounded by a circle of fire. The morning was dark and lowering, with frequent gusts of rain; and already frequent explosions towards Lindenau told that the retreat had begun, and the destruction of the caissons, which could not be brought away, commenced. The Emperor conferred in private with Marshal Ney for an hour, during which he gave him minute directions as to the Grand Park, containing the whole reserve artillery and ammunition, and treasure of the army, which had been left behind between Düben and Leipsic. His orders were, if he could not get it up so as to join in the retreat, to send it back to Torgau. This done, the Emperor passed by the suburbs round Leipsic, and across the bridge of Lindenau to the Weissenfels road, where he saw General Bertrand, and gave him orders to march to Weissenfels, so as to secure the passage there over the Saale. After having made a careful reconnaissance of the bridges immediately behind Leipsic, he returned through the town, and at eight in the morning, before the action commenced, took his station on the Thonberg, near an ancient windmill, around which the Old Guard had bivouacked. Here he remained nearly the whole of this eventful day. But, strange to say, although he had so recently visited the bridge of Lindenau, and evinced his sense of the necessity of retreat by the orders given to Bertrand, he gave *no orders for the construction of any additional bridges over the Elster.*[1] Nay, when Colonel Montfort of the engineers, struck with the tremendous danger of fighting with a single line of retreat in the rear, urged upon Berthier the necessity of throwing others above and

[1] Cathcart, 324, 325; Odel. ii. 30, 31; Thiers, xvi. 594, 595.

below that of Lindenau, he was met by the rebuff that he should mind his own business, and leave to the Emperor the general care of the army. Napoleon's conduct in this particular is so unaccountable, that one is almost inclined to ascribe it to judicial blindness.*

47. Commencement of the battle.

On the other side, the Emperor of Russia, attended by Lord Cathcart, Sir George Cathcart, Sir Robert Wilson, and his whole staff, was on horseback at daybreak, and rode to the plain around Gossa, where he was met by the King of Prussia and his suite. The opposing sovereigns were now directly opposite to each other, separated at first by about three miles. At nine o'clock, as the guns of Blucher and the Crown Prince were heard from the north, the columns of Schwartzenberg began to move. They had a considerable distance to march before they encountered any serious opposition, the tirailleurs of the French retreating as the heavy columns of the Allies approached them. About ten, however, they came in sight of the steady lines and imposing columns which, extending from Dolitz through Probstheyda to Stötteritz, presented an apparently impenetrable barrier. Not less magnificent was the approach of the Allied army. "Indescribably awful was the spectacle which their advance afforded to the agitated multitude which thronged the steeples of Leipsic. As far as the eye could reach, the ground was covered by an innumerable multitude of men and horses, long deep masses marked the march of the infantry, dazzling lines of light darted from the helmets of the cavalry; the glancing of the bayonets in the rays

* "Le colonel du génie Montfort, qui remplaçait le Général Rogniat parti pour Weissenfels, avait été extrêmement frappé de la difficulté de faire défiler toute l'armée par un seul pont d'une immense longueur, celui qui va de Leipsic à Lindenau. Il avait donc proposé au Prince Berthier de jeter, au-dessus ou au-dessous, d'autres ponts secondaires, qui serviraient au passage de l'infanterie, afin de réserver la chaussée principale à l'artillerie, à la cavalerie, aux bagages. Soit que Berthier, tout plein encore de la peine qu'on avait eue à parler de retraite à Napoléon, n'osât pas lui en parler de nouveau, soit (ce qui est plus probable), qu'il eût l'habitude invétérée d'attendre tout de sa prévoyance, *il repoussa le colonel*, en lui disant qu'il fallait savoir exécuter les ordres de l'Empereur, mais n'avoir pas la prétention de les devancer."—THIERS, xvi. 595.

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of the sun sparkled like the crests of foam on a troubled ocean, while a confused murmur from their ranks, and the rolling of a thousand guns, sounded like the roar of a distant cataract." But as the enemy drew nigh these appearances changed; the quick rattle of the light troops engaged in front on both sides was interrupted at intervals by the heavy booming of cannon; and as the Allied columns approached nearer the whole plain became enveloped in smoke, and one incessant roar, succeeding to the single reports, was heard from every part of the field.[1]

[1] Odel. 74, 75; Fain, ii. 418-420; Bout. 130; Plotho, ii. 402.

48. Success of the Allies on their left at Dolitz.

The Allied left, under Prince Hesse Homburg, first came into action as it advanced on the right bank of the Pleisse towards Dösen and Dolitz. Bianchi led the first line, Weissenwolf the second, and they were stoutly opposed by Augereau and Poniatowski, the latter of whom, as the just reward of his distinguished valour, had been made a marshal of France on the preceding day by Napoleon. Both these villages were carried after an hour's hard fighting by the Austrians; but at Dösen Prince Hesse Homburg received a wound which obliged him to leave the field, and he was succeeded by Bianchi in the command. A large body of Kellermann's cavalry was despatched by Napoleon from his central position on the Thonberg, which at first had some success; but Colloredo coming up with the Austrian reserve restored the combat; and the Allies, pursuing their advantage, gained a mile of ground, penetrating to Connewitz, abreast of the Emperor's position on the Thonberg, and threatening to drive back the French right to the very gates of Leipsic. Seriously alarmed at this advance, Napoleon sent a division of the Guard, with some of its artillery, under Oudinot, which took the Austrians in flank, while, at the same time, Poniatowski and Augereau, having rallied and established themselves in some strong ground behind a streamlet near Cappelle, opposed a fierce resistance.[2] As Bianchi had the French Guard close upon his right flank, he saw that any farther advance would be hazardous, and, satisfied

[2] Fain, ii. 419, 420; Bout. 130, 131; Thiers, xvi. 599, 600; Cath. 329, 330.

with the advantage he had gained, established himself in front of Connewitz, where he remained during the remainder of the day.

49. Desperate attack on Probstheyda.

By this retreat of the right wing of the French, Probstheyda became the head of a salient angle, which projected as it were into the centre of the field of battle. Between that and Stötteritz, a distance of about a mile, was the decisive point, and it was there that the main efforts of the Allies were directed. The ground, however, was extremely strong; for each of these villages was amply provided with artillery, which swept by a cross fire the whole intervening space; and between the two was placed a long line of guns, with strong masses of infantry and cavalry between their interstices, which seemed to bid defiance to any attack, however formidable. Immediately behind the second line stood, on the southern slope of the Thonberg, the dense masses of the Guard, overshadowed by their huge sable plumes, ready to succour any part of the line which might require it. Napoleon himself remained there, about three quarters of a mile in rear of Probstheyda, during nearly the whole action. The position, flanked by the two villages, was defended by 80,000 men, the very flower of the French army, and 400 pieces of cannon, crowded into them and an intervening distance of about a mile. It seemed too strong to be forced by any power: but the supports and reserves of the Allies having come up, and the cannonade to the north showing that Blucher and the Crown Prince were now fully engaged, orders were given for the central column to commence the assault of Probstheyda. This order was instantly and enthusiastically obeyed. Under cover of a tremendous and concentrated fire of artillery, sent over the heads of the attacking columns, the Prussian brigade of Prince Augustus of Prussia and General Pirsch, which had solicited and obtained the post of honour, swiftly advanced up the slope leading to the village, which formed a natural glacis, as if made for Drouot's guns.[1] The terrible dis-

[1] Odel. ii. 34-36; Fain, 420, 421; Vaud. i. 214; Cath. 330, 331; Die Grosse Chron. i. 871-874; Thiers, xvi. 600, 601.

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charge of grape at first staggered the Prussians; but being reinforced, they returned with redoubled vigour, and, rushing forward, entered Probstheyda at a run, and made themselves masters of half the village.

50. Probstheyda is regained by the French.

Seeing the key of his position all but wrested from him by this desperate assault, Napoleon descended from the Thonberg, and in person led the Old Guard up to the rear of Probstheyda. The sight of the well-known bear-skin caps, and the knowledge of the Emperor's presence, restored the combat in that quarter. Victor, supported by Lauriston, went fiercely on, and the Prussians were driven out of the village, and desperately cut up by discharges from Drouot's guns, which played upon them as they fell back. Nothing daunted by this bloody repulse, Prince Augustus and General Pirsch re-formed their troops in the plain, and, supported by the remainder of Kleist's corps and a division of Wittgenstein's men, again and again returned to the charge. Despite all their gallantry, however, they were unable to establish themselves in the village, the defenders of which were so actively fed by Victor and Lauriston with reinforcements as the original ones were struck down, that it became evident that by no possible exertions could they be driven out. Probstheyda was soon in flames in every part, and continued to burn fiercely, amidst a tremendous fire from both sides, till night; but the invincible soldiers of Lauriston and Victor still maintained their ground amidst the conflagration. More than once the village fell into the hands of the assailants; but they always rallied on the Old Guard, which stood behind, and night found them still in possession of the smoking ruins.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvi. 601, 602; Cath. 331, 332; Vaud. i. 215; Jom. iv. 471; Plotho, ii. 402.

51. Contest around Stötteritz.

It had been arranged that during this desperate conflict in Probstheyda, Benningsen should, on being supported in flank by the Crown Prince, have assailed Stötteritz in front and flank. The Russians were on their ground in good time, and ready for the attack; but the Crown Prince, with the Army of the North, did not make his appearance till three o'clock, and as the attacking force

before his arrival consisted only of Ziethen's Prussians and Klenau's Austrians, who had been sorely weakened in the battle of the 16th, and as Drouot's guns from Probstheyda took the attacking columns in flank, no serious impression was there made on Macdonald's men. There was, however, a severe cannonade and fire of musketry kept up on both sides; but no great results followed in that quarter, both parties awaiting the issue of the fight which now raged around them in every direction. The Crown Prince had made so long a circuit in crossing the Partha, having gone round by Taucha, that he could not possibly come up till the conflict was all but decided; and when he did appear, the Prussians were as usual in front, and the Swedes in the rear.[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvi. 603, 604; Cath. 332-334; Plotho, ii. 402; Bout. 132; Vaud. i. 215.

52. Operations in the north, and desertion of the Saxons.

While this was going on to the south of Leipsic, an action fraught with an unprecedented catastrophe had occurred to the north-east of that town. It had been arranged at a conference held at eight in the morning between Blucher and the Crown Prince, that the Russian corps of Langeron, which belonged to the Army of Silesia, should for that day act under the orders of the Crown Prince, and it was only on that condition that he agreed to take a part in the attack. This corps, accordingly, passed the Partha, near Mockau, early in the forenoon; and Woronzoff, who commanded Winzingerode's advanced-guard, crossed somewhat higher up the river early in the afternoon, an hour before the rest of the army of the Crown Prince appeared on the high grounds in front of Taucha. Upon seeing so formidable a force accumulating in his front, Ney, who commanded there, took up a defensive position, causing Marmont's corps to form between Schönfeld and Sellershausen, Reynier's to occupy Pauns-

* "Quant à Bernadotte, exécutant un long circuit pour traverser la Partha *le plus loin possible des Français*, il était allé la franchir à Taucha, et *les Prussiens en tête*, s'était avancé en face de Reynier par Heiterblick. . . . Benningsen, opposé à notre gauche qui de Probstheyda remontait au nord jusqu'à Leipsic, avait essayé d'aborder Molckau, mais moins hardiment que Schwartzenberg, parce qu'il attendait Bernadotte et Blucher avant de s'engager sérieusement." —THIERS, xvi. 603, 604.

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dorf, and keeping his own under Souham in reserve. He was with reason very apprehensive of the Saxons, who formed a large part of Reynier's force, consisting of no less than eleven battalions of infantry, three squadrons of cavalry, and three batteries of artillery, and who openly threatened to desert when the Allies approached. For this reason, he placed the division Durutte close behind, professedly to support, really to coerce them. They were, however, in secret communication with the leading officers of Bernadotte's staff; and no sooner did they see the ensigns of that general than they deserted in a body—the cavalry first, next the infantry, and at last the artillery. The division Durutte having made some movements as if to restrain them, the gunners turned their pieces at once on their former comrades, and having thus checked their advance, got clear off. Marshal Marmont, seeing them approaching so near to the enemy's lines, at first thought they were carried away by their military ardour, and hastened to the spot to restrain them. But he was soon undeceived upon seeing that the Allies did not fire, and hearing the loud cheers with which they were received in the hostile ranks. This unparalleled event, so frightful a breach of military faith, yet so natural in men constrained to fight against their country, occasioned a great gap in the French line of defence in this quarter, and pushed to extremities the brave and faithful men who, against forces triple their own, still sought to maintain it.[1] *

[1] Theirs, xvi. 605, 606; Cath. 334, 335; Marm. v. 292, 293; Odel. ii. 24.

53. Action between Ney, Marmont, Blucher, and Bernadotte.

This important event rendered an immediate retreat of the troops in advance near Paunsdorf necessary. Reynier's corps, now reduced to the single division of Durutte, threatened on the right by Bubna from the Grand Army, with whom they had been long engaged, and on the left by Bulow from that of the Prince Royal, which was coming

* "Huit jours auparavant, l'Empereur, passant en revue les Saxes, leur avait dit que ceux qui ne voulaient plus combattre pour nous étaient libres de quitter le service."—ODELEBEN, ii. 24; BIGNON, xii. 406. If this be true, it aggravates much the guilt of the Saxon defection.

up, was compelled to give ground and retire to Sellershausen. Ney no sooner heard of the disaster than he sent Delmas's division from his own corps to reinforce Durutte, while Marmont, to keep abreast of the retrograde movement, drew back his right, but maintained his left in Schönfeld, which was held as resolutely as Probstheyda at the other extremity of the field. The contest for the possession of this beautiful village was most desperate. Seven times it was taken by Blucher, who assaulted it with Langeron's veterans, and as often it was retaken by the dauntless grenadiers of Lagrange, who were intrusted with the defence. At length Ney reinforced the defenders by the division Ricard, from Souham's corps, and the village, the theatre of so much bloodshed, remained in the hands of the French. But in other parts of this portion of the field of battle they were not equally successful. Sir Charles Stewart, who was with the Prince Royal's staff, persuaded him to send Captain Bogue with the English rocket brigade, which had recently arrived from Woolwich, to aid in the attack of the enemy's squares, which, after abandoning Sellershausen, were slowly and steadily retiring in the plain between it and Schönfeld. This was the first time that this formidable weapon of modern war had been seen in Europe,* and the effect was almost like magic. "After the first fire, the square," says Sir Charles, "delivered themselves up as if panic-struck." The results would have been still more serious but for the timely arrival of a large body of the artillery and cavalry of the Guard, which, despatched by Napoleon, arrived at the gallop, and, by their rapid fire and headlong charges, arrested in some degree the progress of the victors. Orders now arrived from headquarters to suspend the advance at all points, and continue the battle only by a general cannonade. This was immediately obeyed everywhere excepting at the village of Schönfeld, which Blucher commanded Langeron

* It was brought into use by the Duke of Wellington at the passage of the Adour, in February 1814.

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at all hazards to retake at the point of the bayonet. The brave Russian led on the attack, and after a desperate struggle it was finally carried at six at night, and remained in their hands till morning.* On other points the cannonade continued with the utmost violence, till darkness, by preventing any further aim, put an end to the conflict, and Bernadotte established his headquarters at Paunsdorf during the night; while Blucher, whose army was reduced to half its number by the detachment of Langeron's corps to the Prince Royal, after an obstinate conflict to the north of the Partha, drove the enemy entirely into Leipsic, and his troops passed the night in the suburbs close to the walls.[1]

[1] Cathcart, 335, 336; Marm. v. 293, 294; Thiers, xvi. 605, 606; Lond. 172, 173; Bout. 137, 138; Die Grosse Chron. i. 896, 897; Jom. iv. 474, 475.

54. Close of the battle, and its results on both sides.

By the effect of these successes, the situation of the French was rendered to the last degree perilous; and it was universally felt in both armies that another such day would complete the destruction of their whole force. They had fought in a semicircle, nearly a league within that on which they had stood during the battle of the 16th, but even that interior circle had now been broken in at several points, and at all considerably forced back. It was true that in the centre Probstheyda and Stötteritz still remained in the hands of their invincible defenders, but on each flank much ground, and many important positions, had been lost. On the Allied left, Dolitz was in the hands of

* Marmont says that Schönfeld finally remained in the hands of the French. "Pendant ce temps," says he, "les attaques sur Schönfeld succédaient, et le beau et grand village fut pris et repris sept fois. Jamais l'ennemi ne parvient à s'en emparer complètement. Les troupes de ma deuxième division et un détachement de la troisième eurent la gloire de cette defence héroïque. Elles comptaient pour rien le nombre de leurs ennemis et soutenirent le combat près de huit heures. A la fin de la journée, mon artillerie étant entièrement demontée, ou sans munitions, et l'ennemi s'étant tellement rapproché avec la siennes, qu'il n'y avait plus moyen d'y tenir, mes troupes firent un léger mouvement en arrière; mais l'artillerie du troisième corps étant venue à notre secours ainsi que la division Ricard, le village de Schönfeld fut repris une huitième fois, et ainsi finit cette malheureuse mais glorieuse journée."—MARMONT, v. 294. Sir Charles Stewart, who was on the spot, says it was finally taken just before dark by Langeron (LONDONDERRY, 173); and Sir George Cathcart says the same. "When Bulow attacked Paunsdorf, Langeron carried Schönfeld, and Ney retired upon his position towards Reudnitz."—CATHCART, 336.

the Austrians, and the French right had been forced back a league to Connewitz; while, on the Allied right, Sellershausen, Paunsdorf, and Schönfeld had been conquered by their forces; the line had been forced back two miles; and Blucher, from beyond the Partha, in their rear, was at the gates of Leipsic. Nothing in modern war had been seen like the fire of artillery which followed the suspension of the infantry attacks along the whole line. Two thousand guns, of which 1300 were on the side of the Allies, and 700 on that of the French, were on either line hurried to the front, and without moving kept up an incessant fire with the utmost vigour till dark. The scene is thus described by an eyewitness: "The cannonade and skirmishing of advanced posts in all quarters did not cease till after dark, and at the time the Emperor left the ground the conflagration of thirteen villages or large farms marked the field of battle. Along this line, from Connewitz to Schönfeld, which formed a semicircle of about six English miles, the three great armies of the Allies were for the first time united and placed in juxtaposition, as well as in contact with the enemy, along their whole front. Now also the Allied chiefs, for the first time, became confident that a complete and signal defeat must on the following day reward their exertions, and decide the final issue of the campaign in their favour. Blucher, convinced that a general pursuit would be the order for the next day, caused the corps of D'York to commence its march on Halle and Merseburg. The whole army bivouacked for the night on the ground on which they had fought; the Prince Royal made Paunsdorf his headquarters, and the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia retired to sleep at Rötha."[1]

[1] Cathcart, 337, 338; Thiers, xvi. 603-607; Odel. ii. 34-36; Fain, ii. 430; Marm. v. 296; Die Grosse Chron. i. 897-900.

55. Napoleon on the evening after the battle.

Napoleon, on his side, felt the necessity of a retreat, and towards evening he had given orders to that effect. Bertrand, with the aid of the two divisions of the Guard under his orders, had succeeded in driving Giulay, who was opposed to him in the meadows beyond the Pleisse, before him, and opened the road to Weissenfels; and

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towards evening the baggage and carriages of the army began to defile in that direction. Blucher, who got word of what was going on, immediately sent intimation to Schwartzenberg that the enemy were preparing a retreat, and dispositions were made in all the Allied armies to renew the conflict on the following morning, and complete the destruction of the enemy. Till eight o'clock Napoleon remained in his position on the Thonberg, surrounded by his marshals. Little was said in the sad and melancholy circle. The troops had fought with surpassing heroism and devotion, but there was no concealing the fact that they had been overpowered, and that, if they remained where they were another day, total ruin might be anticipated. The position of the enemy threatening to surround them on either side; the dreadful circle of bivouac fires which bounded the horizon on the east, south, and north; the dead and the dying who lay around them, told but too plainly at what a price the position had been maintained during the day. But the statement of the engineer and artillery officers was still more alarming. They reported that above 200,000 cannon-shot had been expended in the two preceding battles; that only 16,000 remained; and that it was impossible to renew the contest without 30,000 additional troops, and some hundred caissons of ammunition. Neither could be obtained; for the last sabre and bayonet had been brought up during the day, and the grand park of ammunition which had been deposited at Torgau, and had set out to join the Grand Army, had been unable to penetrate through Blucher's army, and been obliged to retreat to that fortress. During this conference, big with the fate of Europe, Napoleon, overcome with fatigue, and having already taken his resolution, fell asleep in his chair, his head sunk on his breast, his hands negligently hanging by his side. His generals kept a respectful silence, but after a quarter of an hour he awoke with a start, and said, "Am I awake, or is it a dream?" Soon, however, recovering his recollection, he gave directions for

a retreat; and, leaving his position on the Thonberg, returned to Leipsic, where he spent the remainder of the night in dictating orders to his different marshals, and the commanders of the fortresses, which were to be now abandoned to their own resources. Soon after daybreak he sent a message to the King of Saxony, who was inconsolable at these disasters, to the effect that he relinquished his treaties, and left him at full liberty to consult his own advantage in the course which he should pursue.[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvi. 608, 609; Odel. ii. 34, 35; Fain, ii. 430, 431.

56. Immense embarrassment occasioned by the single line of retreat to the French.

But then appeared in the clearest manner the ruinous effects of the extraordinary omission of Napoleon in regard to his line of retreat. "There was not a moment to lose," says Marshal Marmont, "in commencing our retreat, rendered difficult by the peculiar position of Leipsic, the embarrassment occasioned by the agglomeration of so many corps d'armée, and the defiles which they had to pass. Numerous bridges should have been thrown over the Elster to give the infantry the means of crossing at once in several columns abreast, while the chaussée was left free to the artillery, the cavalry, and the equipages; *but not one had been made.* The état-major had not received any orders on the subject, and had not even thought of it. One would have thought that officers would have been appointed to superintend, during the night, the passage of the artillery, and the regular march of that

* In this memorable and decisive battle, although the preponderance of force, upon the whole, was greatly in favour of the Allies, yet in the contest to the south of Leipsic, from Connewitz to Stötteritz, where Napoleon commanded in person, the opposing hosts were very nearly equal. Deducting Bertrand's corps and the two divisions of the Guard which were sent across the Elster, on the one side, and Giulay's corps which was opposed to them, on the other, there remained about 240,000 of the Allies to 150,000 of the French—a great superiority doubtless, but not so much so as would at first appear, as the Swedes, 20,000 strong, were never brought up by the Crown Prince at all, and Bulow's corps did not come into action till three in the afternoon. "As regards the army of Murat and Napoleon's Guard, they will be found to amount to somewhere about 96,800 men; while, if we deduct the 25,000 men of Benningsen and Bubna, who were held in check and neutralised by Ney in consequence of the non-arrival of the Army of the North, the army of Schwartzenberg immediately opposed to Murat's command amounted to no more than 104,000—a superiority of only 8000 men."—CATHCART, 333.

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immense matériel. Nothing of the kind had been ordered. The carriages, placed in three or four parallel columns on the boulevards of Leipsic, finding it impossible to advance from want of order, the soldiers with them lay down and slept all night beside their vehicles, and everything was in confusion on the morning of the 19th. Possession should have been taken of the suburbs of the town to retard as long as possible the entrance of the enemy's columns, and leave time for the passage of the artillery and caissons; but no previous reconnaissance having been made, none of us knew the localities, the points to occupy, the issues to guard. The gardens, too, which surrounded Leipsic rendered the defence difficult. The troops being unable to circulate freely and move from one point to another, the enemy in that labyrinth easily found places wherein to penetrate. Once any of the enemy's troops got in, terror and disorder took possession of our troops, and all defence became impossible."[1]

[1] Marm. v. 296, 297.

57. Last interview of Napoleon and the King of Saxony. Oct. 19.

Napoleon had a melancholy interview with the King of Saxony early on the morning of the 19th. He left him free to do as he pleased; and on his expressing a wish to remain, he desired him to make what terms he could, but in an especial manner recommended the wounded to his care. He then caused a Saxon battalion, which had formed part of the Imperial Guard, to be placed in front of the King's abode, to afford some sort of protection during the first moments of the assault, and after taking leave of the Queen and Princesses, he mounted his horse and rode off on the rode to Lindenau. He soon found the street impassable from the crowds of soldiers and confusion of guns and carriages which blocked up the gates of the town, and he at length only made his way through by turning to the left and traversing a garden almost alone. As he crossed the Elster on reaching Lindenau, he ordered the bridge to be mined, ready to be blown up when the last of the defenders of Leipsic had crossed over.[2]

[2] Odel. ii. 36, 37; Cath. 344, 345; Fain, ii. 432, 433; Bignon, xii. 411.

No sooner were the Allies aware, from what they learned was going on inside the town, that the French were preparing for a retreat on the morning of the 19th, than the most active preparations were made to press on and capture all such, at least, as still remained in Leipsic. During the night a considerable number had filed through; the entire Guards and reserve cavalry, with the corps of Victor, Augereau, Bertrand, and part of that of Souham, were already over the marshes, and they brought with them 6000 Austrian prisoners, made in the battle of Dresden—a deplorable remnant of pride, for they took the place of as many French soldiers who might have been preserved to defend their country. About 80,000 men of all arms had in this manner got off; but in such confusion, and the regiments so intermingled, as amounted to entire disorganisation. But the entire corps of Marmont, Macdonald, Lauriston, Reynier, and half Souham's, with the artillery of the Young Guard, and the remains of Poniatowski's Poles, now reduced to 2700, in all 36,000 men, with 100 guns, remained in the town, which they had orders to defend to the last extremity, making use of it as a great bridge-head, to gain time for the remainder of the army with the artillery and carriages to pass over. Marmont charged the remains of Reynier's corps and Dombrowski's division with the defence of the northern suburb, called that of Halle, which was threatened by Blucher, while he took post with his own corps and part of Souham's to guard the eastern suburb and Hinter-Thor, assailed by six Swedish battalions, which Bernadotte had now *for the first time brought into action;* and Macdonald, whose corps had suffered comparatively little, with the weak remnants of those of Lauriston and Poniatowski, defended the southern front of the town, and the barriers of Grimma, Sand, Windmühlen, and Pegau, against which the main body of Schwartzenberg's army was advancing. About nine o'clock, at the very time when Napoleon was taking leave

58. Preparations for an assault of Leipsic. Oct. 19.

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of the King of Saxony, the Emperor Alexander and King of Prussia, with their whole suites, mounted their horses and rode forward towards the town. They soon came to Probstheyda, the scene of so tremendous a conflict on the preceding day. "It would be difficult," says an eyewitness; "to describe the state in which we found that village as we rode through it. The heaps of dead and dying in the streets and lanes were evidence of a gallant defence, and the burnt carcasses of men and horses occasioned by the general conflagration, from which their wounds had probably prevented their escape, formed, indeed, a lamentable picture of the horrors of war. The sovereigns did not remain long to contemplate so painful a scene, but, riding onward, the Emperor arrived at the windmill hill that had been Napoleon's station on the preceding day, and he halted there some time, as it was not above a mile from the suburb about to be attacked, and afforded a panoramic view of the whole combined operation." [1]

[1] Cathcart, 346, 347; Odel. ii. 33-37; Fain, ii. 439, 440; Die Grosse Chron. i. 917, 918; Thiers, xvi. 609-614; Marm. v. 297, 298.

59. Storming of Leipsic.

Imagination could conceive no more magnificent and heart-stirring scene than here presented itself. On all sides the armies of the Allies, preceded or covered by a tremendous artillery, were pressing forward to the assault of the devoted city. A thousand guns, arranged in a vast semicircle about a mile from the walls, kept up an incessant fire on the buildings, which were soon in flames in several places. Under cover of this tremendous discharge, the troops on all sides rushed forward to the assault. Sacken was twice repulsed by Reynier from the Halle suburb on the Partha; but at length, by the aid of Langeron, he forced his way in, and, crossing the bridge in the face of two guns discharging grape, his columns rushed down the main street, spreading terror and dismay into the centre of the city. About the same time Bulow, supported by six Swedish battalions, after two repulses, forced from Marmont the gate of Hinter-Thor, and commenced a guerilla warfare with the French,

who still occupied the windows of the houses on the side of the Grand Army. Benningsen penetrated the barrier of Grimma; Kleist and Wittgenstein stormed those of Sand and Windmühlen; and Hesse Homburg won that of Pegau looking to the south. On all sides the Allied troops, amidst a ceaseless roar of cannon and musketry, drowned at times by the cheers of the men, came rushing, with the irresistible force of a torrent which had burst its banks, into the town. At this moment a series of explosions were heard near the Lindenau gate, which spread alarm through the city. They arose from the blowing up of a number of powder-waggons which the drivers, despairing of effecting a passage through the throng, themselves sacrificed to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy. The panic now became universal. On all sides the troops in the town rushed towards the Lindenau gate, the sole exit left. Marshal Marmont found it impossible to get through the crowd, and he would have been trampled under foot, or left behind and made prisoner, but for some officers of his corps who, recognising him in the tumult, placed him in their midst, hewed a way through the throng with their sabres, and succeeded in forcing his horse into the living stream, by which he was swept over to the other side of the bridge.[1]*

[1] Marm. v. 297, 298; Thiers, xvi. 616, 617; Bout. 143-146; Fain, ii. 441; Cath. 345, 346; Jom. iv. 480, 481.

What rendered the pressure at this point so extreme, was that the north and south boulevards, and the great

* "Le désordre était partout. L'encombrement causé par les voitures sur les boulevards, l'affluence de ceux qui se retiraient, empêcherent aucune formation ni aucune disposition. Enfin la terreur emporta tout le monde. L'on jugera de ses effets quand on saura qu'il y a un boulevard circulaire entre la ville et les faubourgs, et que les troupes se retiraient à la fois par le boulevard du nord, par celui du midi, et par le milieu de la ville; les trois colonnes se reunissaient sur la chaussée de Lindenau, debouché commune. La foule était si pressée sur ce point de reunion qu'ayant pour mon compte fait ma retraite par les bas côtés du boulevard jamais je ne pus entrer sans secours dans le courant. Deux officiers du 88 s'en chargerent. L'un *frappa tellement avec son sabre* qu'il parvint à faire un léger vide, et l'autre ayant saisi et tiré fortement la bride du petit cheval Arabe que je montais, le jeta dans cette masse confuse où dans les premiers moments *il fut porté*, tant la foule était compacte."—MARMONT, v. 299, 300.

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60. Blowing up of the bridge, and surrender of the troops in the town.

street of the town, all of which were covered with troops, guns, and carriages, met there, and only one street led from the point of their junction to the bridge of Lindenau, which, as already mentioned, had been mined by Napoleon's orders with a view to its being blown up when the troops had all passed. The passage, however, was entirely stopped by the desperate struggle which was going on behind to get across. At this instant Colonel Montfort, the engineer officer charged with the destruction of the bridge, came up to Marmont and asked him which was the last corps that was to pass over. Marmont answered, as well he might, that the confusion was such that chance only would determine that point. Just then a tremendous explosion was heard towards the bridge, and its fragments were seen hurled into the air. It was occasioned by the corporal left in charge of the mine, who, when Montfort went forward to speak to Marmont, seeing some Cossacks streaming down into the meadow on the eastern side of the Elster, concluded that the last was passing, that the enemy was at hand, and that there was no time to be lost in firing the train. He did so accordingly; the explosion took place, and all hope of escape was at once destroyed to the troops which remained behind, and the immense multitude of sick and wounded which encumbered the hospitals and private houses. A yell of horror burst from the dense multitude thus cut off. All order or command was immediately lost; and the whole alike, marshals, generals, and private soldiers, each for himself, sought safety as best they could. Some threw themselves into the Elster, and succeeded by swimming in reaching the opposite shore; but the great majority were either drowned in the attempt, or in despair gave it up and surrendered themselves prisoners of war.[1]

[1] Lond. 174, 175; Marm. v. 299, 300; Thiers, xvi. 616, 617; Odel. ii. 39-41.

Among those who plunged in and were drowned was Prince Poniatowski, the heroic Polish general, who had just been made a marshal of France. His horse stemmed the flood, but fell back on the rider as it was scrambling

61. Death of Prince Poniatowski, and capture of the whole French rear-guard, and losses on both sides.

up the opposite bank, and he perished. More fortunate, Macdonald, by great exertion, succeeded in swimming his horse across, and escaped. But Lauriston, Reynier, and twenty other generals, with 20,000 unhurt officers and private soldiers, were made prisoners; while, either in the battle or the town, 250 pieces of cannon and 900 baggage-waggons and caissons were taken. The King of Saxony and all his family remained in the power of the victors. The total loss of the French in the three days was not less than 65,000 men, of whom 30,000 were prisoners; and this independent of the sick and wounded (22,000 in number) taken in Leipsic; and by the desertion and dispersion after the battle, they were weakened in all by at least 100,000 men. That of the Allies in killed and wounded was at least as great; it amounted, even on the showing of their official accounts, which were probably under the truth, to 1800 generals and officers and 45,000 private soldiers.* At such and so terrible a sacrifice of

* Sir R. Wilson states the loss of the Allies in the three days much higher. "I cannot as yet obtain the return of Blucher and the Crown Prince's losses; but the Allied Grand Army, exclusive of them, has, I am satisfied, been reduced, since the 15th October, by 50,000 men. Blucher lost in the corps of York alone on the 16th October 8000 men. Benningsen tells me that his column alone lost 5000 men on the 18th; and that, unless the Saxons with the artillery had come over, they would have lost many more."—WILSON, ii. 181. But Wilson always took a very gloomy view of the Allied affairs. The following is the account of the loss of the Allies, divided according to their respective nations, as given in the official returns, affording a just criterion of the share which each had in the dangers and honours of the conflict:—

| | Generals. | Officers. | Privates. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Russians, . . . | 18 | 864 | 21,740 |
| Prussians, . . . | 2 | 520 | 14,950 |
| Austrians, . . . | 1 | 399 | 8,000 |
| Swedes, . . . | | 10 | 300 |
| Total, . . | 21 | 1793 | 44,990 |

—*Die Grosse Chronik*, i. 937; KAUSLER, 952.

The loss of the French was never accurately ascertained, owing to the confusion and disorganisation of the army, and the immense losses by desertion during the retreat which immediately followed. But Marshal Marmont says, that on the night of the 19th there were only 60,000 men remaining to the Emperor; Cathcart makes them 80,000.—*See* MARMONT, v. 301, and CATHCART, 346. In either view the loss of the French in the three days must have been above 100,000, for they unquestionably began the conflict with 190,000 men, even on the admission of their own historians. *See* THIERS, xvi. 542, "Dans la première journée le total de nos forces s'élevait à 190,000 hommes."

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life and happiness was the deliverance of Europe effected! According to his usual system of laying the blame everywhere but on himself, Napoleon, in the bulletin of the battle, ascribed the whole disaster to the corporal who blew up the bridge; but it is evident, that when the throng was such that Marshal Marmont and his horse were carried along by it without touching the ground, and 20,000 men, with 200 guns and 900 carriages, remained still to pass over, with the enemy's advanced posts thundering in close pursuit, that sinister event only accelerated the final catastrophe by a few minutes, without in any sensible degree augmenting it.[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvi. 617-619; Marm. v. 299, 300; Lond. 174, 175; Richter, ii. 323; Odel. ii. 39-41; Vaud. i. 222; Danilefsky, 234.

62. Entry of the Allied sovereigns and generals into Leipsic.

At two o'clock, the firing having ceased at all points, and the whole troops in the town laid down their arms, the Allied sovereigns and generals made their triumphant entry into Leipsic, and met in the great square of that city. The Emperor Alexander and King of Prussia entered from the south, accompanied by Lord Cathcart, Sir George Cathcart, Sir R. Wilson, and the whole suite of both sovereigns. Marshal Blucher came up from the north, accompanied by Sir Charles Stewart, who had rendered such essential service during the last few days; the Crown Prince was followed by six Swedish regiments, whom he had, by forced marches, brought up on the last day for the triumph, though he had kept them back during the desperate struggles which preceded it. No words can describe the heart-stirring scene which ensued, when the sovereigns and marshals met after so desperate a contest, and mutually saluted each other as victors. It realised "all the magnificence which Eastern imagination had conceived, and all the visions of chivalrous glory which Western genius had portrayed. The city resounded

* This is honestly admitted by Baron Odeleben, who was on the Emperor's staff, and crossed over with him. "Du reste, *ceux qui furent coupés seraient de même tombés entre les mains de l'ennemi.* Sans cet accident, l'impossibilité de sortir *autrement que par l'étroit passage d'une seule porte*, les eût également livrés aux Alliés, qui avaient toute facilité de passer l'Elster sur d'autres points."—ODELEBEN, ii. 41.

with acclamations; handkerchiefs waved from every window, and merry chimes rang from every steeple; while tears, more eloquent than words, rolling over almost every cheek, told that the tyrant was struck down, and Germany delivered." No deeds of cruelty, and surprisingly little of disorder, sullied the triumph of the victors.* Alexander received the captive princes and generals with his wonted courtesy; to Marshal Lauriston in particular, with whom he had been intimate during his embassy at St Petersburg, he evinced marked attention. Though well aware of the more than dubious conduct of the Crown Prince during the war, he was too practised a dissembler to let it appear in his manner. To the King of Saxony alone he showed a cold and repulsive demeanour; he considered him as having been guilty, not only of political change, but personal breach of faith.[1] It was then that Sir Charles Stewart, withdrawing from these scenes of conquest and triumph, repaired again to the field of battle, and, seated on a stone on the Thonberg, wrote that memorable despatch† which soon thrilled every heart in

[1] Lond. 173, 174; Richter, ii. 323; Die Grosse Chron. i. 932-934; Thiers, xvi. 619-621; Cath. 353, 354.

* "To the credit of the Allies it must be stated that they were guilty of very few excesses, and none in the city itself. They are entitled to much admiration for their humanity. Very few of the enemy were put to the bayonet. As I was one of the first who entered, I immediately went up to the King of Saxony, and assured him that protection was ordered for the inhabitants, and I gave a Russian company as a guard for himself. He seemed much affected."—WILSON, ii. 176.

† "LEIPSIC, *October* 19, 1813.

"MY LORD,—Europe at length approaches her deliverance, and England may triumphantly look forward to reap that glory her unexampled and steady efforts in the common cause so justly entitle her to receive. I wish it had fallen to the lot of an abler pen to detail to your Lordship the glorious events of the last two days; but in endeavouring to state the main facts, and to send them off without a moment's delay, I shall best do my duty, postponing more detailed accounts until a fresh opportunity.

"The victory of General Blucher on the 16th has been followed by a complete and signal victory on the 18th by the whole of the combined forces over the army of Buonaparte, in the neighbourhood of Leipsic. The collective loss of above 100 pieces of cannon, 60,000 men, an immense number of prisoners—the desertion of the whole of the Saxon army, also of the Bavarian and Wirtemberg troops, consisting of artillery, cavalry, and infantry—many generals, among whom are Reynier, Vallery, Brune, Bertrand, and Lauriston,—are some of the first fruits of this glorious day. The capture by assault of the town of Leipsic this morning—the magazines, artillery, and stores of the place, with the

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Great Britain, and, translated into every civilised tongue, made the world ring from side to side.

63. Deplorable state of the French army during the retreat to the Rhine.

While these events were passing in Leipsic, the French army, sad and dejected, was moving towards Markrannstadt, where Napoleon passed the night. Marmont joined him there, and found him "much depressed, as well he might be. During the short space of two months an immense army of 450,000 men had melted away in his

King of Saxony, all his court, the garrison and rearguard of the French army—all the enemy's wounded, the number of which exceeds 30,000—the narrow escape of Buonaparte, who fled from Leipsic at nine o'clock, the Allies entering at eleven—the complete *déroute* of the French army, who are endeavouring to escape in all directions, and who are still surrounded,—are the next subjects of exultation. In further results your Lordship can best receive it from an account of our military situation. It will be my endeavour to give as succinct an account as I am able, first, of the general and combined operations determined upon by the Grand Army; and, secondly, to describe what immediately came under my own observation, namely, the movements of the Prince Royal and General Blucher's.

"My previous despatches have detailed the positions of the Allied armies up to the 16th. It having been announced by Prince Schwartzenberg that it was the intention of their majesties the Allied sovereigns to renew the attack upon the enemy on the 18th, the Armies of the North and Silesia were directed to approach, and the following general dispositions were made. To make them intelligible to your Lordship, I must premise that the attack on the 16th by the Grand Army occurred in the neighbourhood of Liebertwolkwitz. The country around being peculiarly adapted for cavalry movements, a very sanguinary and hard contest occurred with that arm and the artillery, composing in number 600 pieces between the opposing armies. Two solitary buildings, which the enemy had occupied with several battalions of infantry, and which formed nearly the centre of their position at Probstheyda, were attacked by the Russian infantry of the 1st corps, and, after several repulses, carried with amazing carnage. The whole of the enemy's cavalry under Murat was then brought forward. They made a very desperate push at the centre of the Allied position, which for a short period they succeeded in carrying. To oppose this powerful cavalry, six regiments of Austrian cuirassiers charged in column. Nothing could exceed either the skill or the desperate bravery of the movement; they overthrew all before them, destroying, I am told, whole regiments; and returned to their ground with many prisoners, having left 700 dragoons within the enemy's line. Both armies remained nearly upon the ground on which the action had commenced. Many officers were killed or wounded; and General Latour Maubourg, who commanded the enemy's cavalry under Murat, lost his leg; and each lost nearly 25,000 men.

"The following dispositions were made for the attack on the 18th. Napoleon's army was stationed on that day nearly as follows: The 8th, 2d, and 5th corps under Murat, in and around Connewitz; his right commanded by Prince Poniatowski, at that village; his centre under Victor at Probstheyda; the left under Lauriston at Stötteritz. The Guards occupied the Thonberg, where Napoleon was in person. Ney, in person was with Buonaparte; Oudinot

hands. This was the second time during a year that this had been presented to the world—a spectacle of destruction of which modern times heretofore had presented no example. There remained to him 60,000 men, composed partly of the Guard, partly of the corps of cavalry which had passed the bridge and defile of Lindenau, in the night and during the 18th, together with the corps of Bertrand. These were the only forces that could be called regular, on

supported Poniatowski with la Jeune Garde; and Mortier was charged with the care of Leipsic. Now, as to the dispositions and orders of the Grand Army: The first column, under Barclay de Tolly, composed of Wittgenstein's, Kleist's, and Ziethen's corps, and the Russian and Prussian Guards, were to advance to the heights of Wachau. The second column, under the hereditary Prince of Hesse Homburg, a most gallant and distinguished officer, composed of the divisions Bianchi, Alois Lichtenstein, and Weissenwolf, with General Nostitz in reserve, and also Colloredo, was to march on Dolitz, in a direct line to Connewitz. The third column, under Bennigsen, with the corps of Klenau and Ziethen, was at Holzhausen, and was to act according to circumstances.

"While the Grand Army was to commence their attack on the morning of the 18th, from three different points of assembly, on the principal villages situated upon the great road leading to Leipsic, the Armies of the North and Silesia were jointly to attack the line of the Saale and the enemy's position along the Partha road. General Blucher gave to the Prince Royal of Sweden 30,000 men, infantry, cavalry, and artillery; and with this formidable reinforcement the Northern Army was to attack from the heights of Taucha, while General Blucher was to retain his position before Leipsic, and use his utmost efforts to gain possession of the place. In the event of the whole of the enemy's forces being carried against either of the armies, they were reciprocally to support each other, and concert further movements. That part of the enemy's force which for some time had been opposed to the Prince Royal of Sweden and General Blucher, had taken up a very good position on the left bank of the Partha, having its right at the strong point of Taucha and its left towards Leipsic.

"To force the enemy's right and obtain possession of Taucha was the first operation of the Prince Royal's army. The corps of Russians, under General Winzingerode, and the Prussians, under General Bulow, were destined for this purpose; and the Swedish army were directed to force the passage of the river at Plozen and Mockau. The passage was effected without much opposition. General Winzingerode took about 3000 prisoners at Taucha, and seven guns; and, General Blucher put his army in motion as soon as he found the Grand Army engaged very hotly in the neighbourhood of the villages of Probstheyda and Stötteritz. The infantry of the Prince Royal's army had not time to make their prescribed flank movement before the enemy's infantry had abandoned the line of the river, and retired over the plain in line and column towards Leipsic, occupying Sellershausen, Paunsdorf, and Schönfeld in strength, to protect their retreat. A very heavy cannonading and some brilliant performances of Winzingerode's cavalry marked chiefly here the events of the day, except towards the close, when General Count Langeron, who had crossed the river and attacked the village of Schönfeld, met with considerable resistance, and

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whom he could reckon. Those who left Leipsic on the 19th when the enemy were entering the town had no longer any consistence or organisation. The troops which we commanded had had their discipline so completely dissolved by the fatigues and hardships which they had endured, that they abandoned themselves without restraint to every excess. The impossibility of making any regular distribution of provisions for the subsistence of the men,

at first was not able to force his way. He, however, took it, but was driven out, when the most positive orders were sent him by General Blucher, to re-occupy it at the point of the bayonet, which he accomplished before dark.

"Some Prussian battalions of General Bulow's corps were warmly engaged also at Paunsdorf, and the enemy were retiring from it, when the Prince Royal directed the rocket-brigade, under Captain Bogue, to form on the left of a Russian battery, and open upon the columns retiring. Congreve's formidable weapon had scarce accomplished the point of paralysing a solid square of infantry, which after our fire delivered themselves up as if panic-struck, when that gallant and accomplished officer, Captain Bogue, of the British Royal Artillery, alike an ornament to his profession and a loss to his friends, received a wound in the head which deprived the country of his services. Lieutenant Strangways succeeded in the command of the brigade, and received the Prince Royal's thanks through me for the services they had rendered. I had great satisfaction in witnessing and being present most of the day with this valuable corps, which did most extraordinary service.

"During the action 22 guns of Saxon artillery joined us from the enemy, and two Westphalian regiments of hussars and two battalions of Saxons. The former were opportunely made use of in the instant against the enemy, as our ammunition and artillery was not all forward. The Prince Royal addressed the latter by an offer to lead them against the enemy, which they to a man accepted.

"The communication being immediately established between the grand attack and that of these two armies, the Grand Duke Constantine, General Platoff, Milaradowitch, and other officers of distinction joined the Prince Royal, communicating the events which had occurred in that direction. It seems the most desperate resistance was made by the enemy at Probstheyda, Stötteritz, and Connewitz; but the differeut columns bearing on those points having at length come up, they carried everything before them—General Benningsen taking the villages on the right bank of the Kentchoe, and General Giulay manœuvering 25,000 Austrians on the left bank of the Elster. General Thielman and Prince Alois Lichtenstein moved upon the same river; and the result of the day was that the enemy lost above 40,000 men in killed and wounded, 65 pieces of artillery, and 17 battalions of German infantry, with all their staff and generals, which came over in mass during the action. The armies remained upon the ground which they had so bravely conquered this night. The Prince Royal had his bivouac at Paunsdorf, General Blucher at Witterest, and the Emperor and King at Roda.

"About the close of the day, as it was understood the enemy were retiring by Weissenfels and Naumburg, General Blucher received an order from the King of Prussia to detach in that direction. The movement of the Prince Royal

afforded too complete a justification of these disorders. Every one occupied himself exclusively with the care of self-preservation; and as the military spirit was extinct among them, and had been succeeded by the most woeful depression, the most thorough disgust at the service, every one at a little distance from the standards threw away his arms, and marched with a stick in his hand. Out of 60,000 men who remained, 20,000 moved on in this manner, in little bodies of eight or ten each, who roamed over the country on either side of the road in quest of food, and covered it at night with an immense quantity of disorderly fires. These soldiers received from the army a name become historical; they called them 'fricoteurs,' seekers of food."[1]

[1] Marm. v. 302, 303.

having completely precluded the retreat on Wittenberg, that upon Erfurth had long since been lost to them, the line of the Saale alone remains. And as their flanks and rear will be operated upon during their march, it is difficult to say with what portion of their army they may get to the Rhine.

"This morning the town of Leipsic was attacked and carried after a short resistance by the armies of Blucher, the Prince Royal, Benningsen, and the Grand Army. Marmont and Macdonald commanded in the town. They, with Augereau and Victor, only escaped with a small escort. Their Majesties the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia, each heading their respective troops, entered the town at different points, and met in the great square. The acclamations and rejoicings of the people are not to be described. Handkerchiefs waving from the windows, hands clamorous in applause, and, lastly, but most forcible, tears rolling from the eyes, marked the delightful era of the delivery of the world from the tyranny of a despot to be at hand. The moment was too delicious to an Englishman to describe. I confess myself unequal to it, and claim your Lordship's indulgence.

"The multiplicity of brilliant achievements, the impossibility of doing justice to the prowess that has been displayed, the boldness of the conception of the commander-in-chief, Prince Schwartzenberg, and the other experienced leaders, together with the shortness of the time allowed for making up this despatch, will plead, I hope, an excuse for my not sending you an accurate or perfect detail, which I hope, however, to do hereafter. I send this despatch by my aide-de-camp Mr James, who has been distinguished for his services since he has been with this army, and will be able to give your Lordship all further particulars.—I have the honour to be, &c., CHAS. STEWART, *Lt.-Genl.*"

This very interesting despatch for the most part appeared in the public newspapers, but many passages were omitted which are now supplied from the original draft in the Londonderry Papers. A copy was intrusted to Mr Jolly, a Prussian gentleman connected with England, who, at great personal risk, carried it through Germany and Holland, and in an open boat to London, where he arrived on the 27th October—an incredibly short space of time at that period. "The original," says Lord Londonderry, "as above given, was written *on a stone on the field of battle.*"—*MS. Londonderry Papers.*

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64. New distribution of the Allied armies.

The Allied army underwent a great dislocation after the battle of Leipsic. Bernadotte, with the Army of the North, was to move by Cassel towards Hamburg, to watch the powerful army, 35,000 strong, which Davoust commanded in that city, and which it was of great importance to prevent getting back to the Rhine. Benningsen was despatched down the Elbe by Magdeburg to the same point. Klenau was detached towards Dresden, to aid in the blockade of St Cyr, who, with an equal force, lay in that fortress, and was soon expected to surrender. Blucher, with the corps of Langeron and Sacken, and a large body of Cossacks under Platoff, was charged with the pursuit of Napoleon on the road to Mayence, and he effected the passage of the Elster, below Leipsic, on the 20th. D'York, by crossing at Halle, had already preceded him; Giulay, with his Austrians, moved by Pegau on Naumburg; but the great body of the Grand Army remained in Leipsic, reposing itself, restoring order in that city, and burying the dead in its environs, a task of no small labour, for above 20,000 corpses of all nations encumbered the ground and spread a pestilential air around. These movements, in particular that of Bernadotte, to whose headquarters Sir Charles Stewart continued attached, were dictated even more by political than military considerations. The backwardness of the Crown Prince in bringing up his troops, especially the Swedes, during the preceding eventful campaign, was well known at headquarters, and as much to the Emperor Alexander and Prince Schwartzenberg as to Lord Castlereagh and Sir Charles Stewart.* But he was too important a person in the confederacy for his aid to be dispensed with. The sovereigns, therefore, took the wise part of dissembling in the mean time, and

* "The Crown Prince was still at Leipsic when I went away, dressed like an opera-master. Stewart is outrageous with him: he says he not only did nothing, but avoided doing anything, although he might, by co-operating with Blucher, have crushed a great part of the enemy's forces."—WILSON, ii. 186.

doing nothing which might evince a distrust in his sincerity. They gave him, accordingly, the command of the powerful army destined to observe and blockade Davoust, in which duty, as it concerned his own immediate interests, it was not likely he would be deficient. This direction of his forces was highly agreeable to Bernadotte, who, by his own confession, felt himself not unnaturally in a false position, distracted between his attachment to the land of his birth and his hopes of ascending its throne, and his duties to that of his adoption.[1] *

[1] Fain, ii. 449, 450; Mem. de Charles Jean, ii. 100; Die Grosse Chron. i. 947-950; Lond. 147; Cath. 366, 367.

65. Disastrous retreat to the Rhine, and great losses incurred in course of it.

The retreat of the French army to the Rhine was attended by disorganisation as complete, and losses as great while it lasted, as that from Moscow had been. Nothing could exceed the disorder and confusion which everywhere prevailed, and which soon came to infect the Guards and *corps-d'élite* cavalry themselves. The Emperor, who stood a few days afterwards at a window in Erfurth to see the troops passing through, said to those around him, "Now, only see what a set they are—they are going headlong to the devil—I shall lose eighty thousand men from this to the Rhine in this manner." He never abated, however, in his self-confidence, and immediately added, "However, between the Rhine and this, I shall have two hundred and fifty thousand men in spring." Meanwhile, as the great road to the Rhine had been cut by Giulay's march on Naumburg, the army, to gain the Freiburg road to Erfurth, crossed the Saale at Weissenfels, and rolled incessantly on, horse, foot, and cannon tumultuously together, like a torrent which had broken its bounds. The officers, despairing of the possibility of doing so, abandoned all thoughts of preserving order, and, like the rest, thought only of self-preservation. Prisoners were taken in great numbers by the Cossacks

* "The Prince Royal lost no time in quitting Leipsic, and moved in the direction of Hamburg. The fact is, that at Leipsic he was in a false position. The sight of every dead body, of every wounded man, of every French prisoner, awakened in his breast the most cruel feelings."—*Memoires de Charles Jean*, ii. 100.

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and Allied cavalry, almost without resistance, as the men had for the most part thrown away their arms whenever they came up with them, which, however, from the rapidity of the French retreat, was not very often. A thousand stragglers were in this manner captured by the Prussian hussars of Blucher, at the passage of the Unstrut at Freiburg; and the same day Bertrand's corps, at the defile of Kösen, sustained a severe action to prevent the advance of Giulay by it, upon the flank of the retreating army. Some degree of order was restored during a rest of two days at Erfurth, in which the Emperor dictated the bulletin giving the account of the battle; but when the march was resumed on the 24th, the disorder returned with more fury than ever. Two thousand men and twenty-four guns were taken at Gotha. At Eisenach, Blucher, who had hitherto alone followed the French army on the main road, turned off towards Coblentz; and the Grand Army, which had as yet been advancing along the lateral chaussée of Zeitz and Jena, took up the pursuit and continued it with its light troops through the Thuringian Forest. It was hard to say in the last days of the retreat whether the army was not melting away as fast as it had done in retiring from the Beresina from the severity of the Russian winter.[1]

Oct. 21.

Oct. 22 and 23.

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Oct. 31, 1813, MS.; Bout. 161; Vaud. ii. 252, 253; Cath. 365, 366; Thiers, xvi. 629-645.

66. Battle of Hanau, and retreat of the French across the Rhine. Oct. 31.

The Guards and cuirassiers, however, preserved some degree of consistency, and the artillery was, considering the hardship they had undergone, in a surprising state of strength and efficiency. The power of this arm, joined to the intrepidity of the Old Guard and the vigour of the cuirassiers, enabled the Emperor to force his way on the 30th October through the Austro-Bavarian army, which, advancing from the banks of the Inn to those of the Main, endeavoured at Hanau to bar his retreat, and cast one last and expiring ray of glory over a period of such disaster. A thousand additional men, however, were lost in that hard-fought battle, though the Allies lost 8000. The retreat continued without interruption to

the Rhine. On the 1st November the red domes and steeples of Mayence appeared in view, and the army, sad and dejected, defiled across the bridge, over which they had so often passed to carry desolation and oppression into Germany. Not more than 40,000 men, in military array, crossed the bridge, followed by a crowd, about half as much more, of stragglers and unarmed men. Twenty thousand men had joined them during the retreat, but as many had been lost by fatigue, desertion, and the sword of the enemy. This was all that remained of 400,000, who with Napoleon had commenced the campaign two months before. History presents no example of so terrible a discomfiture of so great a host, under circumstances when no perversion of ingenuity could ascribe it to accidental circumstances, or the severity of the weather, or any other cause but military defeat.[1]

[1] Marm. v. 306, 307; Thiers, xvi. 647-650; Bout. 161, 162; Plotho, ii. 412; Schoell, iii. 390, 391.

67. Napoleon's orders to the Grand Park and garrisons in the rear.

Stupendous as these events were, they were not the only results which followed the battle of Leipsic. Its effects on the beleagured fortresses on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula, were not less important. Napoleon, though at the eleventh hour, and when it was too late, had not been unmindful of these important strongholds and their powerful garrisons. In the night of the 18th October he dictated orders to the commanders of these garrisons to join together, and endeavour, in a united mass, to force their way to the Rhine. The Grand Park, from which, as already mentioned, Blucher's advance had separated the Grand Army, was ordered to make the best of its way back to Torgau. St Cyr, at Dresden, who was at the head of 35,000 men, of whom 20,000 might be efficient, was directed to issue from that place with his whole troops, force his way to Torgau, take up its garrison, and with it and the Grand Park proceed to Wittenberg, and thence to Magdeburg; and, with the accumulated force of all these garrisons and such of those on the Oder and the Vistula as could join them, move

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towards Hamburg. Davoust had orders to meet them half way; and with this united host they were to re-enter France by the way of Wesel, at the head, it was hoped, of 120,000 men. This comprehensive plan, which would have more than doubled the efficient force at the disposal of the French Emperor, and rendered the frontier of the Rhine altogether impregnable, was of easy execution, and would unquestionably have succeeded if it had been attempted before the battle of Leipsic, when Napoleon was at hand to give it assistance; for the blockading forces of these fortresses were mostly landwehr, incapable of operations in the open field: but, attempted immediately after that event, and when any such combined operation of distant garrisons seemed hopeless, it entirely failed. St Cyr tried to commence it, and with half the

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garrison of Dresden broke through the first echelon of the blockading force and advanced half way to Torgau. But when he arrived there he did not meet either a force or any messenger regarding it, which he expected from the latter fortress. The enemy's troops around him were hourly increasing; and, fearful that, if he continued his advance farther, he would sacrifice his own men and lose Dresden without any advantage, he retraced his steps and re-entered the Saxon capital. This put an end to the whole project; and the garrisons in all the fortresses, in silent despair, remained expecting the fate which awaited them.[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvi. 667-668; St Cyr, iv. 247-250; Odel. ii. 227-234; Die Grosse Chron. i. 1156-1160.

* Napoleon was in an especial manner exasperated against the King of Bavaria as instrumental in inducing these unparalleled disasters; and it is no wonder he was so, for he had loaded that monarch with benefits, and the only return he met with was his co-operation for the destruction of his benefactor. In the following spring he thus expressed himself to M. d'Argenteau at the Tuileries: "The King of Bavaria has been guilty of a double treachery. He wished to get possession of the keys of France for my enemies. What need had Bavaria of the keys of France? It is the kick of the ass's foot: but let him beware; the lion is not dead. I have just returned from killing Wrede and passing over the Bavarian army. The King of Bavaria shall see me again next year, and he will not soon forget my visit. He was a little prince whom I made great; he is a great prince whom I shall make little."—MEREY D'ARGENTEAU, *Notice Historique*, 48, 49; and BIGNON, xii. 423.

This fate to all was disastrous; to some, accompanied by unexampled circumstances of horror. Both in Dresden and the other fortresses the pangs of want were soon felt with great severity; for immense as had been the amount of the store of provisions laid up in these strongholds at the commencement of the campaign, they had been nearly all exhausted by the consumption, during three months, of the enormous multitude of men and horses whom Napoleon had during that time made to depend upon them. In addition to this there was accumulated within their walls a mass of above 50,000 wounded men, for whom all the efforts of French organisation and German kindliness had proved inadequate to provide any proper accommodation. Still more terrible, there had broken out in these abodes of unexampled woe a typhus fever of the most malignant character, which soon carried off multitudes both of the garrison, the wounded men, and the inhabitants. In Torgau, in particular, the pestilence exceeded anything recorded in recent times. Out of nearly 25,000 who had taken refuge within its walls after the retreat of the French army from the Elbe, only 10,000 remained when the fortress capitulated on the 26th December, of whom more than half were in a dying state in the hospitals. In that fortress was taken the grand park, consisting of 287 guns and 424 caissons, which had been the object of such solicitude to Napoleon during the latter part of the campaign. Dresden, after having exhausted all its means of subsistence, capitulated, on condition of the garrison being sent back to France, on the 11th November, with 35,000 men; which convention was, with a breach of faith unworthy their high character, converted into a surrender at discretion by the Allied sovereigns. One by one the remaining fortresses on the Oder, the Elbe, and the Vistula, as their means of subsistence were exhausted, lowered their colours. Before the middle of January 1814 the work of conquest was complete. Dresden, Torgau, Witten-

68. Deplorable state and surrender of the fortresses.

Dec. 26.

Nov. 11.

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berg, Zamosc, Stettin, Custrin, and Glogau, Erfurth, Wurzburg, Dantzic, and Modlin, had surrendered, and their garrisons were prisoners of war. Magdeburg and Hamburg—the latter under the stern rule of Davoust, with a garrison 40,000 strong—alone still displayed the tricolour flag. Eleven strong places, many of them first-rate fortresses, with above 2000 guns and 130,000 soldiers, of whom 110,000 were capable of active service in the field, had been made prisoners. The deliverance of Germany was complete, and has proved of lasting duration. The work of twenty years' victories was undone in a campaign of three months; everywhere the French standards had retreated behind the Rhine, and they have not been seen beyond that barrier since that time —a period now (1860) of six-and-forty years.[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvi. 658; Die Grosse Chron. i. 1127-1141; Plotho, ii. 524; Richter, ii. 411.

69. Immense force displayed by Napoleon on this occasion.

It is impossible to conclude this brief and imperfect sketch of this ever-memorable campaign without a passing retrospect on the enormous force which the French Emperor displayed on this occasion, and the light which it throws on the magnitude of the strength which a long course of victories had centred in his hands. Such a retrospect will best explain and amply vindicate the policy subsequently pursued both by Lord Castlereagh and Sir Charles Stewart at the Congress of Chatillon, the negotiations at Paris, and the Congress of Vienna. Since the war began in Spain in 1808, Napoleon had lost at least 500,000 men in the Peninsula; in the Moscow campaign

* "Napoléon avait laissé à Modlin 3000 hommes, à Zamosc 3000, à Dantzig 28,000, à Glogau 8000, à Custrin 4000, à Stettin 12,000, à Dresde 30,000, à Torgau 26,000, à Wittenberg 3000, à Magdebourg 25,000, à Hamburg 40,000, à Erfurt 6000, à Wurzburg 2000, ce qui faisait une force totale de 190,000 hommes, presque tous valides (car nous n'avons admis dans cette évaluation ni les malades ni les blessés), tous aguerris ou instruits, commandés par des officiers excellents, et comprenant notamment des soldats d'artillerie et du génie incomparables. Jamais plus belle armée n'eût porté le drapeau de la France, si, par un miracle, on avait pu réunir ses débris épars, et leur rendre l'ensemble que leur isolement dans des postes éloignés leur avait fait perdre. . . . . C'est ainsi que ces 190,000 hommes si précieux, suffisant au printemps pour former le fond d'une superbe armée de 400,000 hommes, avaient été sacrifiés." —THIERS, xvi. 657.

he sacrificed fully as many more; and yet he began the campaign on the Elbe, in August 1813, with 400,000 soldiers in the field, besides 190,000 deposited in the fortresses on that river, the Oder, and the Vistula. This armament was superior by 100,000 to the entire force which the Allies could bring against it, and yet of this enormous mass, resting on such an array of strong places, he brought back only 70,000 to the Rhine, of whom not more than 40,000 had their arms, or were in an efficient state. Twice, in little more than a year, he had lost half a million of men, yet he was able in the spring following to array such an army for the defence of France as rendered it a matter of doubt whether the mighty host of the Allies would not be defeated, and French preponderance maintained in Europe! Such was the power which England and her allies had to confront in the ensuing campaign and negotiations; and no one who does not consider these facts, and transport himself in imagination to those times, can form an adequate idea either of the difficulty of the task which awaited her diplomatists and warriors intrusted with it, or the magnitude of the debt which Europe owes them for the manner in which they performed it.

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70. Removal of Sir R. Wilson to the Austrian army in Italy.

These considerations afford the real clue to an event which occurred at this time, and excited no slight surprise at the Allied headquarters; and that was the removal of Sir Robert Wilson from the honourable post he had so long held there to a similar situation, in which he was to correspond directly with the Government, with the Austrian army in Italy. This decision was announced to him in instructions from Lord Castlereagh, received on 25th December 1813, at Frankfort.* Lord Castlereagh's

* "In the evening I received instructions from England which appointed me military resident at the Italian army, to correspond direct with the British Government; and only to keep our ambassador informed, but not to be under his control. This is a clause of no consequence while Aberdeen remains, as we are on terms which require no such powers of independence. Lord Castlereagh notes that my income will be suitably augmented by a bat and forage allowance, to meet the exigency of extraordinary expenses. On the whole,

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letter was couched in courteous terms, and the situation to which he was transferred was one of honour and importance, with an increase of emolument. But Sir Robert Wilson felt it not unnaturally as a sort of honourable banishment, and his separation from his old companions in arms gave him great regret. To soften the separation to him, Sir Charles Stewart told him "that it was owing to a very old political engagement [Lord Burghersh's], almost coeval with Castlereagh's own appointment; and he is very angry with the measures which have been taken to show the inconvenience resulting to the service from its maintenance to my exclusion, as it embarrasses his brother."[1] But although the merit of the successor who immediately after came in his place (Lord Burghersh) was great, and his connections high, these were not the real reasons of the change, which was dictated by overpowering reasons of state necessity.

[1] Wilson, ii. 267.

71. The real reason of this change.

The real reason was expressed tersely, but correctly, in a letter of Lord Castlereagh's to Lord Aberdeen, in which he said, "If Sir Robert Wilson has the confidence of all other governments, he wants that of his own." This was the simple fact, and it rendered his farther retention at the Allied headquarters at this juncture not only inexpedient, but dangerous. Sir Robert's military talents and heroic courage had won for him not only the high esteem but the warm regard of the Allied sovereigns; but that only rendered him the more dangerous in his situation at their headquarters, for he had become imbued with their ideas and moulded to their views. With all his chivalrous and heroic qualities, he had a secret vein of vanity in his character, which rendered him little qualified to withstand the flattery of emperors and kings. He had become thoroughly Austrian in his diplomatic ideas, though a true Briton in his heart: Metternich was the polar star of his

neither the spirit nor the letter of the instructions is liable to objection; but I thought it right to record the feelings of regret which attend my removal from the Allied army. I hope I have done so with temper and success."—WILSON'S *Diary*, ii. 279.

political worship. He entertained the most exaggerated ideas of the resources of the French Emperor, and regarded the invasion of France as a senseless chimera which could terminate in nothing but disaster.* He knew perfectly the fearful losses the Allies had sustained during the campaign; but he did not know, or would not believe, that those of the French had been still greater. With this idea he was a most acceptable guest with the Emperor of Russia, who, seeing Russia safe beyond the reach of attack, had little interest in engaging in a *third* hazardous campaign for the Low Countries and frontier of the Rhine; and with the Emperor of Austria, who desired to save the French throne for his daughter and her descendants. So far had these views proceeded, that in the first week of December *the Allied sovereigns, without communicating with Lord Aberdeen,* had agreed to treat on the basis of securing to France the line of the Alps, the Rhine, and the Pyrenees.[1] On the other hand, Lord Castlereagh regarded such a basis as fatal to the interests of Great Britain, and leaving France possessed of a strength which would enable her again, at pleasure, to invade and subjugate the adjoining states. In these critical circumstances, when England, with decisive success almost within her reach, was on the point of losing all her advantages, nothing could be more perilous than to have the military correspondence from the Allied headquarters in the hands of an officer of great repute entirely imbued with the Austrian ideas on the subject, and constantly representing to the Cabinet the difficulties with which the carrying out

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[1] Wilson, ii. 265.

* Sir R. Wilson's opinions on this subject were very strong, and repeatedly expressed. For example: "When I calculate all the political and military disadvantages of a coalition such as ours; the want of zeal to continue the war in the Russian army; the inability of Prussia to repair her losses, and the certainty of Buonaparte *being able to acquire great strength before spring,* I have no hesitation in giving my voice for peace on the terms which Buonaparte offers. If we are now too elated, and *direct our views to encroachment on the natural boundaries of France,* or to change of dynasty by compulsion, we may find that extravagant pretensions diminish our power of enforcing them. I wish to secure the future while the force of Europe is concentrated. Opinion in France will achieve there what remains to be done."—WILSON, ii. 179.

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the British views would be attended. At such a crisis, his high character, known confidence with the Allied sovereigns, and military reputation, only rendered him the more dangerous correspondent for the Cabinet of St James's, many of whom were also secretly inclined to the same views. And this was the real cause of the change in the duties of this gallant officer.

72. Powerful agency of the Stewart family in the deliverance of Europe.

No opinion is more general in the world, or more frequently expressed by writers on the subject, than that Napoleon was crushed and Europe delivered by a general effort of insurgent humanity, which rose up like one man to shake off the load which had oppressed it. This is undoubtedly true in one sense, for unless those who took the lead in the struggle had been seconded by the general concurrence and heroic efforts of the people under their charge, all the efforts made for the deliverance of Europe would have proved ineffectual. But it is not less true that all these general exertions would have proved equally nugatory if it had not been for the strenuous agency and intrepid perseverance of a *very few men*:—"Paucorum civium egregiâm virtutem cuncta patravisse."[1] Europe, it is true, rose up like one man to fight, *but more than half rose up in support of, Napoleon.* In the beginning of the campaigns of Salamanca, Moscow, and Leipsic, he was not only superior, but *immensely* superior, to all the forces the Allies could bring against him. In this memorable few, it is surprising how much is to be ascribed to one family. If Lord Castlereagh had not broken through the usual routine of military promotion to give Wellington the command in Portugal, and supported him and urged the continuance of the Peninsular war, when both were violently assailed by a powerful opposition, and Government had only a slender majority, if majority it could be called, in the House of Commons, the campaign of Torres Vedras would have never encouraged the Russians to resist the French invasion, and furnished a model on which their system of defence

[1] Sallust.

was to be framed. If he had not in the same year strenuously combated the recommendation of the Bullion Committee, all but forced upon Government by the House of Commons, to compel the bank to resume cash payments in two years, the monetary crisis of 1825 or 1857 would have occurred at the opening of the Moscow and the Salamanca campaign, and national bankruptcy would have prostrated Great Britain at the very crisis of the war. If he had not withstood the loud clamour against the Peninsular war, if he had failed in feeding Wellington with adequate supplies in 1813, the battle of Vitoria would never have caused Joseph's crown to drop from his head, or brought Austria at the decisive moment into the field, after the armistice of Pleswitz. But for the lavish and, as it seemed at the time, prodigal expenditure in aid of Prussia, Austria, and Russia, during the campaign of 1813, the forces of these powers could never have been arrayed in sufficient strength to combat the half million of armed men who were collected round the standards of Napoleon. But for the manly and intrepid conduct of Sir Charles Stewart in terminating the indecision, and compelling the advance, at the eleventh hour, of Bernadotte, the Army of the North would never have been brought into action at Leipsic, and a decisive victory would never have delivered 250,000 prisoners, in the field and in the fortresses, into the hands of the Allies, at the very moment when France was threatened with invasion.* But for the exertions of these two men in the Cabinet, aided as they were by those of Wellington and Blucher in the field, the convulsive efforts of Germany in 1813 would have been attended by no other result than that which followed those of Austria in 1809,

* This is no exaggeration. Thiers states (xvi. 637) the garrisons taken, exclusive of sick and wounded, at . . 190,000 men.
Cathcart estimates the prisoners at Leipsic, including the sick and wounded, at . . . . 52,000 „
Taken in retreat to Rhine, . . . . . 12,000 „
Total, . 254,000 „

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73. Immense errors of Napoleon in this campaign.

or Prussia in 1806, in fixing the chains of servitude in a more hopeless manner on the European states.

But if the strenuous virtue and persevering courage of those illustrious men were mainly instrumental in terminating the Imperial domination, with all its host of attendant evils, in Europe, not less important were the errors of Napoleon himself in producing the same results. Indeed, it is in the latter, especially during the Leipsic campaign, that the immediate cause of his overthrow is to be found. Not that he erred in choosing the Elbe as the base of his defensive position, as Sir George Cathcart and several other military writers of much weight have supposed: on the contrary, that line appears, as already shown, to have been judiciously chosen, alike with a view to retain in their allegiance the states of the Rhenish Confederacy now ranged under his banner, to fix the seat of war in the heart of Germany, far from the French frontiers, and to give him a strong central position from which he might at pleasure issue forth and crush any one of his assailants by the sudden direction of a part of his superior force against him.* The narrow escape which the Allies made from destruction, after the attack on Dresden in the end of August, proves with what wisdom this position had been selected by the French Emperor. But after this, his military conduct seems to have been a concatenation of the most unaccountable errors, which at length terminated in unheard-of disasters. By suspending the pursuit of the Allied Grand Army during the retreat to Bohemia, and halting

* "To abandon the Elbe was, politically speaking, to abandon Germany. At Dresden, Napoleon equally menaced Austria through Bohemia on his right; threatened to cut the great line of communications of the Russians and Prussians through Silesia in his front; and hung like a thunder-cloud over Berlin on his left. Had he retired to the Saale, all the north of Germany would have risen. Moreover, as a defensive position, the line of the Saale was not so strong against an attack in front as that of the Elbe, being unsupported by fortresses; while against a flank attack, it was *as easily turned from Bavaria through the Thuringian forest*, as that of the Elbe was from Bohemia through the Erz Gebirge."—*History of Europe*, vol. xii. chap. lxxx. § 108, note.

the Young Guard at Pirna, he saved that army from destruction, and induced Vandamme's disaster at Culm; by directing the simultaneous advance of Macdonald on Liegnitz, and Oudinot on Berlin, he lost all the advantages of his central situation between them, and brought on the defeats of the Katzbach and Gross-Beeren; by lingering so long on the Elbe after these catastrophes and that of Dennewitz had evidently rendered the position there no longer tenable, he sacrificed 100,000 men, without any advantages, from fatigue and famine, and for the first time gave a decisive numerical superiority to the Allies; by afterwards retaining 170,000 excellent troops in the beleaguered fortresses, and engaging at Leipsic with a force now become inferior to that of the three Allied armies put together, he rendered inevitable a great defeat, which was converted into total ruin by the unaccountable mistake of fighting with a broad line of marshes, traversed only by a single road and bridge, in his rear. All these errors arose from the great General being merged in the imperious Emperor; from undue, and, as it proved, fatal, confidence in his star; from a determination to do everything at once, and fascinate the minds of men by extricating himself out of apparently hopeless difficulties by a dazzling triumph. So evidently were these causes mainly instrumental in inducing his fall, that one is tempted to believe that human folly as well as greatness is made the instrument of Omnipotence in working out its designs, and that there is much truth in the Roman maxim,—"Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat."

# CHAPTER XII.

## LORD CASTLEREAGH AND SIR CHARLES STEWART AT THE CONGRESS OF CHATILLON—CAMPAIGN OF 1814 TO ITS RUPTURE. NOVEMBER 1813—MARCH 1814.



Deplorable condition of the French army which recrossed the Rhine.

THE calamities of the campaign of 1813, and of the retreat from Leipsic, to the French, exceeded anything which could have been conceived. Had the Allied generals been aware of the state to which their once formidable opponents were reduced, they might have marched unresisted to Paris. The wreck of the army fully equalled the devastation produced by the Moscow campaign. The magnitude of the losses which the French had undergone, was not fully known till it was revealed by the candour of the celebrated national historian of the period. "Napoleon," says Thiers, "brought back the remains of the French army to the Rhine in the most deplorable condition. The Guard of 40,000 was reduced to 10,000. The united corps of Oudinot, Reynier, Augereau, and Bertrand, could only muster 12,000 combatants when they entered Mayence, with the defence of which they were charged. The corps of Marmont and Ney, destined, under Marshal Marmont, to defend the course of the Rhine from Mannheim to Coblentz, could scarcely assemble 8000 men. Victor, charged with the defence of the upper Rhine from Strasbourg to Bâle, was not 5000 strong. The two corps of Macdonald and Lauriston, united into one under the former, had not 9000 effective men to dispute the passage of the Lower Rhine from Coblentz to Arnheim.

The whole cavalry of the army, which once formed four corps, was reduced to 10,000, of whom a half were not mounted. The Polish Legion had almost totally disappeared, and the few who remained of it were sent to the rear to Sedan, to endeavour to effect some degree of reorganisation. A mass of stragglers, without arms, most of them bearing with them the contagion of the terrible typhus fever which originated in the fortresses on the Elbe, crossed the Rhine in small bodies, overspread the provinces on the left bank, and diffused consternation and death wherever they passed. It was almost a second retreat from Russia, with this difference, that there remained about 60,000 men in arms, and that we fell back, not on exasperated Germany, but on France, where we found indeed our country, but our country ruined and exhausted."[1] This account, from so undoubted a source, of the deplorable condition of the French army after its retreat to the Rhine, affords the most decisive proof of the wisdom of Lord Castlereagh's decided opinion, so often expressed, that the Allies should not halt, but carry their arms into the heart of France; and of the erroneous estimate which Sir R. Wilson had formed of Napoleon's boundless resources to defend its territory, which, as already seen, led to his transference to the Austrian army of Italy.

[1] Thiers, xvii. 3, 4.

2. State of affairs in Italy.

Prince Eugene, who was charged with the onerous task of defending the Julian Alps, and barring the approach to Italy of the Austrian legions, had only been able to collect 50,000 men around his standard, in lieu of 80,000, whom the Emperor reckoned upon as being under his orders; and even these were got together with infinite difficulty, and by exhausting the whole depôts in the interior of the peninsula. His father-in-law, the King of Bavaria, who, as already mentioned, had joined the Coalition, and brought the retreating French army into serious difficulties on the field of Hanau, secretly despatched an officer to propose to him, in the name of the Allied sovereigns, a principality in Italy, if he would abandon the

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cause of Napoleon, and unite his arms with those of his enemies. But although that Prince was sensible that the cause of the French Emperor was all but desperate, and that he would involve his own wife and children, to whom he was tenderly attached, in his fall, he yet had honour and constancy enough to reply to the officer charged with the mission, that he owed everything to Napoleon; that he could not abandon him in his misfortunes; and that, if obliged to seek an asylum in Bavaria, he was sure that its sovereign would rather receive his son-in-law without a crown than without honour. After this honourable answer, which stood forth in bright relief beside the discreditable tergiversation of Murat at the same period, he communicated the whole transaction to Napoleon.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 6, 7; Eugene's Memoirs, vi. 14, 65.

3. Gloomy aspect of affairs in Spain at the same period.

The situation of affairs in Spain at the same period was still more disastrous. Driven across the Pyrenees after the catastrophe of Vitoria, the French army, which sustained that defeat, had since undergone considerable reverses. Pampeluna and St Sebastian had both fallen; the line of the Bidassoa had been forced; all the talents of Marshal Soult, who had been sent by the Emperor from Dresden to restore matters, had been unable to defend the mountain frontier; and after several obstinate battles, and the shedding of torrents of blood on both sides, the British troops had been established in a solid manner within the French territory. Marshal Suchet, after the overthrow of Vitoria, adopted the only rational plan in the circumstances, which was to evacuate the province of Valencia, which he had conquered with so much difficulty, and withdraw all his forces for the defence of Aragon and Catalonia. He even went a step farther, and suggested, in accordance with Soult's wishes, to the Emperor, that he should evacuate all Catalonia, except Figueras and Barcelona; and with his whole forces, including the garrisons brought away, make for the Eastern Pyrenees, and join his troops to those of Marshal Soult, and with this united force overwhelm Wellington. This plan, however,

presented many difficulties in the execution, not the least of which was the certainty of jealousy arising between the two Marshals, if their forces were brought together. In addition to this, also, the positive instructions of the War Minister, conveying the orders of the Emperor, constrained him to leave garrisons in all the principal fortresses on the sea-coast in Valencia, and the chief ones in Catalonia. The result of this was, that he could only collect 25,000 men wherewith to re-enter Aragon, a force too inconsiderable to be of any weight in the great duel between Soult and Wellington in the western Pyrenees. Thus the self-confidence and unbending character of Napoleon involved him in the same enormous error in Spain which was proving so fatal to him in Germany; and when a contest was approaching, in which, with miserably inadequate forces, he was to maintain a painful struggle with his enemies in the heart of France, forces amply sufficient to have cast the balance in his favour were doomed to useless inactivity in the fortresses of Spain and Germany. "More than 140,000," says Thiers, "of the best troops of Europe were in this way lost to France, in the fortified places of which he retained so strong a hold; while the defence of the country against 200,000 victorious Allies was maintained by less than half the number of real soldiers, recruited only from ruined depôts obliged to furnish recruits for the line after two or three months' compulsory drilling." [1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 14-19; Suchet's Memoirs, ii. 348-454.

4. Discontent and despair in the interior.

If the external prospects of France were thus gloomy, still darker was the prospect which the interior presented. "The army," continues the same author, "convinced of the folly of the policy for which it was doomed to shed its blood, loudly murmured, though in presence of the enemy it was ever ready to sustain the honour of the national arms. The nation, deeply irritated by the omission, after the victories of Lützen and Bautzen, to conclude a peace, regarding itself as sacrificed to an insensate ambition, now discovered by the horrors of its

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results, the evils of a government without control. Disenchanted in the illusion of the Emperor's genius, having never had any trust in his prudence, but believing in his invincibility, it had now become discontented with his government, little reassured by his military talents, terrified at the immensity of the masses which were approaching—in a word, with its *morale* shaken to the foundation; and all that at the very time when it would have stood in need of the whole patriotic enthusiasm of 1792, and of all the trustful admiration of the First Consul which was felt in 1800. Never was mental depression so excessive brought in presence of peril so extreme. Most certainly, if the Allied sovereigns had been aware of a part even of these truths, they would only have arrested their victorious columns on the Rhine as long as was necessary to replenish their bread-carts and cartouch-boxes, and have marched direct on Paris the moment they arrived on the great frontier stream. But the Coalition, fatigued with its efforts, surprised with the very magnitude of the triumph which had concluded two campaigns of extraordinary severity, halted, without any real reason, on the Rhine; and fortune gave us a last respite before definitively going over to our enemies."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 21, 22.

5. Cause of this inactivity on the part of the Allies.

The principal cause which contributed to this pause in military operations, without doubt, was the respect inspired by the halo of the Republican and Imperial victories, and the idea, universally diffused, of the magnitude and difficulty of any attempt to conquer France on its own territory, with which Sir Robert Wilson had been so strongly impressed, and which Lord Castlereagh so strongly contested. Great as had been the success, brilliant the victories of the two preceding campaigns, the Allies were far from being aware of the immensity of the losses sustained in the course of them by the French troops; or that, since their standards crossed the Niemen, above a million of their best soldiers had either perished or been made prisoners by the enemy. It is not surprising that they could not conceive, and would

not credit, the reports received of the extent of the enemy's losses, for it far exceeded anything recorded in modern history. Add to this, that the most powerful of the Allied sovereigns were by no means inspired with the same desire to push the war *à toute outrance* which was felt by the Prussians, still smarting under six years of bondage and interminable contributions, and by the English, who felt the necessity of stripping of his exorbitant strength an enemy at their own door. The Russians, perfectly secured by the results of the campaign of 1812, had been desirous of halting on the Oder, and did not disguise their impression that in advancing to the Rhine, and still more in pushing their conquests beyond that river, they were involving themselves in interminable contests, with which their national interests were very little concerned. The Austrians, exhausted with a war in which they had been engaged at intervals for twenty-two years, and whose finances were in a state of extreme confusion from its effects, felt in the strongest manner the necessity of repose ; and their rulers had little desire, now that the enemy were expelled from Germany, to dethrone the daughter of the Cæsars from her elevated position in Europe. Thus the greater Continental powers were strongly inclined to pause before pushing matters to extremities with France ; and as it was understood that Napoleon was willing to consent to the restoration of the old dynasty in Spain, no serious opposition to an accommodation from its diplomatists was to be anticipated. The Prussians alone, writhing under the recollection of six years of bondage, were unanimous for the prosecution of the war, and the lesser states of Germany were warmly actuated by the same feelings ; but their weight was too inconsiderable to overbalance that of the greater powers. Nothing is more certain than that by a very slight concession Napoleon might have concluded a peace at this period ; and he was never so near being firmly seated on the throne of France, with the Rhine and Alps for a frontier, as within a few months of his definitive fall.[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Nov. 16, 1813, MS. ; Thiers, xvii. 22, 23.

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6. Pacific offers of the Allies from Frankfort by Metternich. Nov. 12, 1813.

Influenced by these considerations, M. de Metternich had no sooner arrived with the Allied sovereigns at Frankfort, than he proposed to them the basis on which the Cabinet of Vienna was disposed to offer peace to the French Emperor. The first proposition was that the sovereigns should remain united till the war was concluded, and that no proposals for a separate accommodation should be received by any of the powers. The second, that the entire direction of the whole armies should be intrusted to a single general, for which high trust he suggested Prince Schwartzenberg. The third was, that each power should receive, as far as possible, not a share of the joint conquests, but restitution of what it had lost, so as to restore matters as much as possible to the *statu quo* before 1789. In applying this principle, however, to Prussia and Austria, which had undergone such extreme changes since the war began, some modification was necessary; and what he proposed was, that the condition of each of these monarchies should be taken as it stood in the beginning of 1805, and restored to that level. In the mean time, and till the restitution was complete, the conquered provinces were to be kept in deposit by the whole Allied powers. The future war was to be divided not into campaigns, but periods, for the purpose of diplomatic arrangement. The march to the Rhine from the Vistula was to constitute the first period; the second, the advance from the river to the summit of the Ardennes and Vosges Mountains; the third, if they were constrained by Napoleon to undertake it, was to terminate only with Paris itself. At the expiry of each of these periods an effort to open negotiations was to be made, on terms increasing, of course, in rigour as the victorious armies advanced.[1]

[1] Mem. par M. de Metternich. Nov. 16, 1813; Thiers, xvii. 29, 30.

These proposals having obtained the assent of the Allied powers, Metternich was not long of finding an intermediate emissary who might form the channel of communication with the French Emperor. The person

selected was M. de Saint Aignan, a brother-in-law of M. de Caulaincourt, and who had formerly been the Minister of France at the Court of Weimar, and an able and intelligent, and withal moderate and conciliating diplomatist. Having fallen into the hands of the Allies during their advance through Germany, he was brought first to Töplitz and ultimately to Frankfort, where Metternich explained to him, in a secret and confidential interview, the intentions and wishes of the Allied sovereigns and their ministers. He assured him that Europe desired nothing so much as peace, and peace on terms honourable and acceptable to all the world; that they were well aware that France, after twenty years of victories, was entitled to be respected, and she should be so; that there was no intention of re-establishing in its full extent the ancient order of things; that Austria, in particular, was not so unreasonable as to insist upon the restitution of all its ancient provinces, but would be contented with a suitable and a respectable position; and that these moderate views were shared by the whole Allied powers. He added that, in proof of the reality of these sentiments, he was charged to offer France the extension of its territory *to its natural frontier—viz., the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees*—but nothing further; that it was time now to think seriously of peace, for the interests, without doubt, of Europe in the first instance, but not less for those of France itself, and for that of Napoleon most of all; that he had raised up against himself a fearful tempest, the intensity and violence of which was hourly increasing; and that if he looked closely into his own dominions, he would find that these sentiments were shared in an equal degree by his own subjects; and that if matters went on as they now were, he might ere long be as much isolated in his own country as he already was among foreign powers; that the moment had now come, and probably it would be the last, when he had it in his power to negotiate on honourable

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7. Proposals intrusted to M. de Saint Aignan. Nov. 12.

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terms, but that if this moment was allowed to escape, nothing would remain but the chances of a desperate and implacable war, which could be terminated only by the destruction of one or other of the contending parties; that all hopes of dividing the coalition were vain; that there were no sacrifices the powers were not prepared to make to preserve the union; that the peace they offered was tendered in good faith, and equally at sea as at land; that Russia, Prussia, and England desired it equally with Austria, for the wish to stop the effusion of blood was universal; but that above all things it was necessary to avoid the deplorable fault committed at Prague, where, from not putting trust in Austria, and not taking a decided part in time, by the lapse of a few hours the opportunity never to be recovered was lost of making peace on favourable terms.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 31-33.

8. Similar assurances of pacific intentions from Russia and England, and terms proposed.

In confirmation of these assurances M. de Metternich introduced successively M. de Nesselrode and Lord Aberdeen, who declared to him, on the part of Russia and Great Britain, that the Allies had no wish to humble or humiliate France; that they did not even desire to deprive her of her natural frontiers, for they were well aware that these were events on which it was in vain to go back; but that they were resolved beyond those limits to accord to her neither territory nor sway, nor even influence, excepting that which great states mutually exercise on each other, when they know how to use their natural advantages without abusing them. After these assurances, so solemnly given by such men, and from so many different quarters, M. de Saint Aignan had not the slightest suspicion of any insincerity, and he replied that he would faithfully recount to his sovereign what he had heard; but that it would be more satisfactory if the substance of it, and the exact terms proposed, were put into a written form, about which there could be no mistake.[2] To this M. de Metternich agreed, and next day he delivered to M. de Saint Aignan formal written pro-

[2] Thiers, xvii. 32, 33; Fain, MS. de 1814; Pièces Just.

posals of peace on the basis announced, of leaving France its natural limits, but nothing more.* With these proposals the latter set out directly for Paris, where he arrived on the 14th November, and immediately laid them before the Emperor.

9. Which are accepted in form by Napoleon to gain time, and he proposes Mannheim for the seat of a congress.

Nothing could be clearer than that these proposals were not only fair, but eminently favourable to Napoleon. They conceded to him, after two campaigns unparalleled for the disasters in which they had terminated, and the material losses with which they had been attended, terms more advantageous, a territory larger, and influence greater than Louis XIV. had ever dreamt of in the plenitude of his power. Nothing but the exaggerated ideas in which he had indulged, and the extravagant expectations he had formed of the dominions which he was to acquire, could have led the Emperor, in the disastrous situation in which he stood, to decline an accommodation on such extremely favourable and even unhoped-for terms. Napoleon, however, feeling that his authority was founded mainly on opinion, and that any return to reasonable propositions would be regarded as a confession of inferiority and the commencement of his fall, was in secret resolved not to accept them, and to hazard all on his favourite maxim, *Tout ou Rien.* As it was indispensable in the mean

* Metternich's proposals to M. de Saint Aignan were as follows:—

"1. The peace to be universal, as well maritime as Continental, and to embrace all nations.

"2. To be founded on the principle of the independence of all nations in their natural or historical limits.

"3. France to preserve her natural limits—viz., the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees—but to advance no pretensions to anything beyond them.

"4. Holland to be independent, and its frontiers on the side of France to be the subject of future arrangement.

"5. Italy in like manner to be independent, and the arrangement of its frontier on the side of Frioul with Austria, and France with Piedmont, to be afterwards settled.

"6. The old dynasty to be restored in Spain; this was a *sine qua non.*

"7. England to make certain restitutions of colonial possessions wrested from France beyond the seas, and a general freedom of commerce as it may be fixed by the law of nations, to be accorded to every state."—METTERNICH'S *Proposals, 12th November* 1813; given in THIERS, vol. xvii. pp. 33, 34.

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time, however, to gain time to recruit his armies, arm and victual his fortresses, and replenish his exchequer, he resolved to temporise, and amuse the Allies with an ambiguous answer. With this view, after having considered the proposals during the 15th, he returned an answer on the 16th, neither accepting nor rejecting the proffered terms, but suggesting Mannheim as the seat of the proposed conference, and professing a willingness to treat on the footing of the independence of nations both by sea and land. This answer was forthwith sent to Marshal Marmont, who commanded at Mayence, with orders to transmit it without delay to the Allied generals, by whom it was received at Frankfort on the 19th.[1]

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[1] Fain, MS. de 1814, 46-50; Thiers, xvii. 36, 37.

10. Extreme gloom and depression at Paris.

It was absolutely indispensable for Napoleon to go through the form, at least, of acceding to the negotiations, for the state of public feeling in Paris had become alarming in the extreme. Scarce a family but had to lament the loss of a brother or a son in the terrible wars in which, during the two last years, the empire had been engaged. Hardly anything was talked of in private society but the fearful slaughter on the fields of Leipsic and Vitoria, or the dreadful losses of the Moscow retreat. Great as had been the sacrifice of life on these melancholy occasions, it was if possible exaggerated by the voice of rumour, which, denied any official or authentic information, supplied its place by the darkest inventions of imagination. The Emperor was represented *in whispers* as a demon insatiate in the thirst for blood, who would, if unrestrained, sacrifice without remorse the *whole* youth of France to his insatiable ambition, and leave in the country only widows for whom no husbands could be found, or old men incapable of continuing the race from which they sprung. These feelings of horror were augmented by the dismal accounts everywhere received of the violence of the Government functionaries in tearing the conscripts from their families, and the pursuit of the fugitives, like wild beasts, by the movable columns

of gendarmes, which scoured the country and ransacked the woods for their apprehension. Nor were the complaints less universal of the endless exactions of the prefects and officers of exchequer charged with the collection of the revenue, by whom justice or right was systematically disregarded, and from whose decision, how iniquitous soever, there was, practically speaking, no appeal. Such was the general consternation that it began to affect the Government functionaries even of the highest grade. Every one, as in a shipwreck, was looking out for his own safety in the crash which was evidently approaching. Two of the highest and most confidential functionaries, Berthier and Cambacérès, made no attempt to conceal their apprehensions; Talleyrand and Fouché were strongly suspected of being involved in some dark intrigue; Macdonald and Marmont, with military frankness, expressed their decided opinion in favour of peace; and Caulaincourt reiterated the sentiments he had so courageously expressed on occasion of the armistice of Pleswitz. The Empress herself, devoured by apprehensions, and not knowing whether to attach faith to the assurances of her husband or of those around him, spent most of her time in tears.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 29, 31, 42; Marmont, vi. 5, 8.

11. Napoleon's reasons for continuing the war.

In the midst of this chaos of unanimity in favour of peace, the Emperor held out firmly for war; and whatever opinion we may form of the reasonableness of his opinions, it is impossible to refuse them the praise of fortitude and magnanimity. "It is easy," said he, "to speak of peace, but it is not so easy to conclude it. Europe makes a show of offering it, but it has no sincere intention of coming to an accommodation. It has conceived the hope of destroying us; and this hope, once conceived, will not be abandoned till the impossibility of realising it has been fully demonstrated. You think we might disarm them by humiliating ourselves before them, but you are mistaken. The more accommodating you are, the more will they rise in their demands; and at

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length they will insist on terms of peace which you cannot for a moment admit. They offer us now the line of the Rhine and the Alps, and even a part of Piedmont—fair proposals, without doubt; but if you appear to agree to them, they will soon demand the frontier of 1790. Could I accept them, I who have received from the Republic the natural frontiers? Possibly there was a time when it would have been well to have been more moderate; but matters have now come to such a pass that any appearance of moderation would be ascribed to fear, and would only remove still further the prospect of a real peace. We must fight again, and fight with desperation; and if we are victorious, we should take advantage of our success to conclude a peace, and rest assured I shall then embrace it with eagerness."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 43.

12. Dismissal of Maret, and other changes in the administration.

The retention of these ideas by the Emperor was universally ascribed to the influence of the Duke of Bassano (M. Maret), who was the known advocate of warlike measures, and was supposed to encourage his sovereign in such views. The public indignation in consequence became extreme against him, and his dismissal was loudly called for as an indispensable preliminary to any sincere negotiation. No one knew better than the Emperor that the Duke of Bassano was not really in fault, that he only reflected the thoughts which emanated from the Imperial breast, and that no one could share his *pensées intimes* who did not hold the same opinions. But the current of public opinion ran with such violence that he felt it was necessary to make some sacrifice in order to appease it; and he determined to abandon the Duke of Bassano in order to effect this object. He was accordingly dismissed from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and M. de Caulaincourt, whose pacific inclinations were well known, as well as his moral courage in asserting them, was substituted in his room. The Duke of Bassano was appointed Secretary to the Council of State, a post of trust and importance, though by no means to the same extent

as the one he had left. M. Daru, who formerly held that office, an able and indefatigable public servant, whose talents have since shone forth in the *History of Venice* was made War Minister for the materiel of the army in room of M. de Cessac, who retired. In fine, M. de Molé was appointed Minister of Justice in room of the Duke of Massa (Reynier), whose advanced years rendered him no longer equal to the fatigues of that laborious office, and who was transferred to the presidency of the legislative body. These changes were of a pacific tendency, as the new functionaries were all known to incline to a moderate policy, and Caulaincourt's appointment had some effect in tranquillising the public mind, and inspiring hopes of an accommodation in the Allied sovereigns.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 47-49.

13. Napoleon's warlike measures, and vast levies of men. Oct. 29.

The warlike preparations on both sides, however, underwent no diminution, and portended the final struggle between the forces of Revolution and those of Conservatism and order. Before quitting Dresden for Leipsic, the Emperor had directed the Empress Marie Louise to demand from the Senate 160,000 men of the conscription of 1815, and 120,000 more of those left from those of the years 1812, 1813, and 1814. The Senate voted the whole 280,000 without the slightest difficulty: but it was an easier matter to vote than find them in the country; and as the youths liable to the law of conscription in 1815 *were in* 1813 *mere boys*, from sixteen to seventeen years of age, they were wholly unequal to the fatigues of a campaign. Nothing was to be expected from them, therefore, but to undertake garrison duty or guard the depôts in the interior. But as the 120,000 levied on the earlier conscriptions were obviously inadequate to restore the armies to anything like the requisite strength, Napoleon fell on the device of ordering a new conscription of 300,000 men drawn from those who had been liable to the conscription in the ten years *preceding* 1813! This was immediately voted by the Senate, and with these 580,000 men he hoped to be able to make

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head against all his enemies. Probably he would have done so, if the men ordered and voted had been really forthcoming. But this was very far, indeed, from being the case; and in attempting to enforce it, appeared in the most striking colours the fatal weakness brought upon the country by the insatiable ambition of its chief, and the real cause of its subjugation. *The military population was exhausted.* This conscription of nearly 600,000 men ordered did not bring 100,000 to his standards, and even they came in in small numbers, and for the most part with feeble boyish constitutions, such as would have caused them to be rejected at once in former times. The conscription for the years 1812, 1813, 1814, and 1815 almost entirely failed, and such as were got were almost all from those liable to serve in the ten preceding years. As they were for the most part married and established in life, the greatest efforts were made to evade the levy, and conceal those liable to it from the public functionaries, and thus it did not produce a third of what had been expected. The reason of this sudden and appalling failure of the conscription at this particular time was that it had now reached those who were conceived in the years 1793 and 1794, when the great levy of 1,200,000 men was made in France to withstand the Allied invasion, and when consequently the young men who should have been fathers in those years were almost all swept off by the scythe of war. This is a very remarkable circumstance, eminently descriptive of one of the chief causes of Napoleon's fall.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 50-52; Goldsmith's Recueil, vi. 517-586.

14. Disastrous state of the French finances.

To provide for the troops, however, even in the scanty number in which they could be brought forward, money was indispensable; and here the weakness of the empire from another cause soon became painfully conspicuous. The expenditure of France during the latter years of the war had assumed gigantic proportions; that of 1813 had amounted to 1,200,000,000 francs (£48,000,000), independent of the cost of collection and the sums levied in name of contributions from the countries in which the

troops were stationed, which amounted to half as much more. But in consequence of the retreat of the French armies from Germany and their expulsion from Spain, these extraneous sources of supply were at once closed, and the whole supplies for the ensuing campaign required to be raised from the inhabitants of France itself. The real cost of the campaign of 1813, with that of collection, had reached the enormous figure of 1,420,000,000 francs (£56,800,000), and the deficit to be provided for amounted to 442,000,000 francs (£16,800,000), while the credit of Government was so utterly exhausted that it was wholly impossible to raise any money by way of loan. In this extremity Napoleon had conceived and acted upon the idea of providing funds by selling the estates of incorporations and municipalities over all France, and realising the price by means of treasury bills by anticipation. This had been done to a great extent in 1811, 1812, and 1813, but even this resource had now entirely failed. The estates were all sold, and the bills granted for their price were at 20 or 30 per cent discount. Nothing now remained but the private property of the Crown, and it amounted to 135,000,000 fr. (£5,750,000), partly in different foreign banks, partly in gold in the cellars of the Tuileries, the latter of which amounted to 63,000,000 fr. (£2,520,000). This secret fund had been partly accumulated by economy on the Civil List, but for the most part was the produce of the sale of licences to evade the Berlin and Milan decrees against English commerce, for attempting to elude which he was daily exposing vast piles of merchandise to the flames, and sometimes shooting their unfortunate owners! It had been intended not so much as a resource against *foreign* war, on which side the Emperor anticipated little or no danger, but as a safeguard against domestic revolution, in which respect he was far from feeling the same security. It was all now applied to the exigencies of the state; but even this ample supply proved inadequate to the public necessities, now that the grand resource of foreign contributions was no

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longer available. Other devices, therefore, were indispensable; and the only practicable one was an additional assessment on real property. Thirty per cent was in consequence at once added to the land-tax, which was expected to produce 80,000,000 fr. (£3,200,000); and 120,000,000 fr. were added to the indirect taxes, in the shape of one-fifth on the salt-tax and one-tenth on the customs and excise. These taxes and levies of money were all demanded of the Senate, and voted by that body, in the course of November, *without the concurrence of the Legislative body*, which stood summoned for the 2d December, and from which a vexatious resistance was apprehended — a strange result of a revolution undertaken to establish the constitutional rights, especially in granting or withholding supplies, of the representatives of the people. The levies and sums demanded were voted by the Senate in profound silence, without a word of observation or dissent being uttered in the whole Assembly.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 53-55.

15. M. de Caulaincourt accepts with many exceptions the terms proposed at Frankfort on Dec. 2.

The intention of the Emperor to make a show only of entering into negotiations in order to gain time was clearly evinced in the long delay which he made in sending an answer to the Allied Frankfort proposals. They reached Paris, brought by M. de Saint Aignan, on the 16*th November*. Nevertheless, it was not for *eighteen days*—viz., on 2d December—that a real and definitive answer was transmitted by the French Government. As already mentioned, indeed, an ambiguous answer, committing himself to nothing, had been despatched by Napoleon on the 16th inst., and received by the Allies on the 19th. To this a reply was sent on the 25th by Metternich, demanding a categorical explanation, before any negotiation could be entertained, as to whether the French Emperor did or did not accept the basis laid down by the Allied sovereigns. All this gained time till the 2d December. On that day M. de Caulaincourt sent a reply, accepting in form the basis proposed, of France retaining the fron-

tier of the Rhine; but he made so many exceptions and reservations that they amounted to an entire departure from the principle in form agreed to. This answer was *concealed from Lord Aberdeen*, and communicated only to the Ministers of Austria, Russia, and Prussia,—an ominous circumstance, which augured ill of the sincerity of Metternich. But the vigilance of Sir Charles Stewart discovered the underhand negotiation, and he sent off notice of the whole affair to his Government.* In his private instructions to M. de Caulaincourt, whom he had named as his plenipotentiary at Mannheim, the Emperor required concessions in his favour from the Allies, which amounted to an entire departure from the terms proposed, and too clearly revealed the intention to resume at no distant period the career of conquest and domination. He even insisted on the retention of a kingdom in Italy for Prince Eugene, that of Naples for Murat, and of one in Germany for Prince Jerome; on the advance of the French frontier into Piedmont; on the fortresses of Kehl opposite Strasbourg, Cassel fronting Mayence, and Wesel on the right bank of the Rhine, and on a part of Holland to the Waal being still retained by France.† There could be no motive for these demands

* "*Dec.* 8.—The answer came from France the day before yesterday (6th). The basis was accepted in the most unequivocal terms; but the sacrifices which France was prepared to make were to be met by sacrifices from England for the re-establishment of Continental and maritime independence and tranquillity. I never read a clearer or more emphatic exposition of intention or views. It made a great impression on all the *first* council. A messenger was sent off with the advice to Paris of the negotiation being accepted by the Allies, and of a messenger being sent to England with these tidings. At night Pozzo di Borgo was despatched. *The whole transaction was concealed from Aberdeen*, because it was feared he would communicate with his colleagues, who might object, and throw difficulties in the way of the pacificators. *Stewart* (Sir Charles) *got notice early in the morning*, and sent off a messenger to England with the news and copies of Jacobi's and Jerome's instructions, which he had obtained. He afterwards communicated to Lord Aberdeen and Cathcart what he had done, and there was additional strife and contention among the triumvirate. The basis, as I have already said, is the *Alps, the Rhine, and the Pyrenees*, with the independence of Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, but without any defined arrangement for these countries."—WILSON'S *Private Diary*, ii. 265.

† Caulaincourt's instructions as to what was to be demanded at the Congress

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but the intention at the next convenient opportunity of resuming the career of conquest beyond the Rhine and the Alps, and re-establishing the French preponderance in Italy and Germany. It was evident that when such were his secret instructions to his plenipotentiary, any show of entering into negotiations was nothing but an artifice to gain time.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 60-63; Fain, 46-57.

16. Ruinous condition of the French fortresses.

In truth, TIME was the one thing indispensable to Napoleon, for such was the state of dilapidation in which the defences of the empire were, from the security engendered by a long career of victories, that it seemed hardly possible to resist the masses of the enemy which threatened to over-

of Mannheim, were in these terms :—"En concédant qu'il n'aurait rien au delà du Rhin, il entendait toutefois garder sur la rive droite *Kehl vis-à-vis Strasbourg, Cassel vis-à-vis de Mayence*, et en outre la ville de Wesel, située tout entière sur la rive droite, mais devenue une sorte de ville Française. Quant à la Hollande, il ne désespérait pas d'en garder une partie en abandonnant les colonies Hollandaises à l'Angleterre. En tout cas il avait le projet de disputer sur les limites qui la sépareraient de la France, et de proposer d'abord l'Yssel, puis le Leck, puis le Wahal, frontière dont il était résolu à ne point se départir, et qui lui assurait ce qu'il avait enlevé de la Hollande au roi Louis. Il entendait de plus que la Hollande ne retournerait pas sous l'autorité de la maison d'Orange, et qu'elle redeviendrait république.

"Quant à l'Allemagne, il consentait bien à renoncer à la Confédération du Rhin, mais *à la condition qu'aucun lien fédéral ne réunirait* les Etats Allemands entre eux, et qu'en rendant à la Prusse Magdebourg, à l'Angleterre le Hanovre, on formerait de la Hesse et du Brunswick *un royaume de Westphalie, indépendant de la France, mais destiné au Prince Jérôme*. Napoléon voulait qu'Erfurt fût accordé à la Saxe en dédommagement du grand-duché de Varsovie, que la Bavière conservât la ligne de l'Inn, afin de n'être pas forcé de lui céder Wurzbourg, ce qui aurait obligé d'indemniser le Duc de Wurzbourg en Italie.

"En Italie il admettait que l'Autriche eût, outre l'Illyrie, c'est-à-dire Laybach et Trieste, une portion de territoire au delà de l'Isonzo, mais à condition que la France *s'avancerait dans le Piémont* autant que l'Autriche dans le Frioul. Tout ce que la France avait possédé dans le Milanais, le Piémont, la Toscane, les Etats Romains, constituerait un royaume d'Italie, également indépendant de l'Autriche et de la France, *et réservé au Prince Eugène*. Le Pape retournerait à Rome, mais sans souveraineté temporelle. *Naples resterait à Murat*, la Sicile aux Bourbons de Naples. L'ancien *roi de Piémont obtiendrait la Sardaigne seulement.*

"Les îles Ioniennes feraient retour à l'un des Etats d'Italie, si Malte était cédée à la Sicile. Dans le cas contraire, *les îles Ioniennes appartiendraient à la France* avec l'île d'Elbe. L'Espagne serait restituée à Ferdinand VII., le Portugal à la maison de Bragance. Mais l'Angleterre ne retiendrait aucune des colonies de l'Espagne et du Portugal. Le Danemark conserverait la Norvége. Enfin on insérerait un article qui consacrerait d'une manière au moins générale les droits du pavillon neutre."—*Instructions Secretes de* NAPOLÉON *à* M. DE CAULAINCOURT, Dec. 4, 1813; THIERS, xvii. 60, 61.

whelm them. The fortresses, both in the first and second line, were for the most part in a very dilapidated condition; and, by a strange perversion, eminently characteristic of the Emperor's tenacious disposition and confidence in his star, while he was surrounding with the most expensive works all the fortresses still in his possession which went to cover or secure his remote *conquests*, those on his own frontier, which were required to cover the territory of *France itself*, were allowed to remain in the most ruinous, and in fact almost defenceless, state. Thus vast additional fortifications were erected at an enormous expense around Venice, Mantua, Palma-Nuova, Dantzic, Flushing, Osopo, the Texel, and many others equally remote; while those on the frontier of France itself, Huningen, Strasbourg, Landau, Mayence, Metz, Mézières, Valenciennes, and Lille, were in the most deplorable disrepair. It was the counterpart of the English expending fabulous sums on Gibraltar, Malta, and Corfu, but leaving Woolwich and London without a mound or a gun to protect them, and Portsmouth and Plymouth in a very insufficient state of security. The scarps were more or less broken down, the ditches dry, the bastions in ruins, the drawbridges incapable of use. In many there was scarce a gun on the ramparts; in all the supply was scandalously inadequate, and for the most part without carriages. Engineers and artificers skilled in their several departments were generally awanting; the officers, both of them and the artillery, were old men beyond the power of enduring active service. The Emperor's first care was to transfer the depôts of regiments from the places in the front line likely to be first assailed, to the second, which would be invested later. The National Guard supplied the place of the depôts which were removed; but the transference was a work of time and difficulty, and in many cases was only in the course of operation when the enemy was upon them.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 62-65.

But all other evils connected with the defence of France sink into insignificance compared with the dreadful mor-

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17. Dreadful mortality in the army on the Rhine, especially at Mayence.

tality in the regular army, from the effect of the contagious disorders which they brought with them from the German fortresses. The four corps—viz., the 4th, 12th, 7th, and 16th—which were under Marshal Marmont at Mayence, and had been raised to 30,000 by the arrival of stragglers and isolated groups of soldiers, who were all directed, as they successively arrived, to that great depôt, were soon reduced to 15,000 by the dreadful mortality which took place in that scene of woe. Horror-struck with so frightful a mortality, which threatened to destroy the whole survivors of the German campaign, Marshal Marmont ordered a general and compulsory evacuation of the hospitals, and the sick into the interior. But this measure, however loudly called for by the military interests of the fortress itself, with which the Marshal was intrusted, augmented in a most alarming degree both the general consternation and the spread of the mortal malady in the adjacent territory of France. It revealed the awful proportions of a pestilence which exceeded anything which imagination itself could have conceived. The continual passage of waggons along the streets and through the gates, each charged with twenty or thirty wretches in the last stage of fever, or actually dying, diffused universal alarm, and produced that general depression of mind which, it is well known, is at once the most powerful agent in predisposing to the reception of the contagion, and the greatest aggravation of the disease when it is actually taken. This terrible disease had assumed, under the multiplication of ills in which it had originated, new and unheard-of features which froze the spectators with horror. Gangrene, even without wounds, of the most virulent kind, generally ensued, especially in the young soldiers; and as the waggons rolled along the streets, the frightful spectacle was exhibited of hands, feet, arms, and even parts of the face, dropping off the unhappy wretches who were huddled in them![1]

[1] Marmont, v. 2, 5; Thiers, xvii. 66, 67.

The Emperor flattered himself that, by the beginning of January 1814, he would have 80,000 men on the Rhine from Bâle to Flanders; but they never, in consequence of

the failure of the conscription, and the mortality, amounted to anything like that number. He cast his eyes also in an especial manner on Belgium and Holland, which were likely to be first attacked, the more so as he was no stranger to the disaffected feelings towards his government with which the inhabitants of those countries were inspired. General Molitor, with a small local force, was charged with the defence of Holland against Bernadotte, who was approaching with a powerful army, composed of the greater portion of the Allied Army of the North, now in part disengaged by the conclusion of an armistice with Denmark, to be immediately noticed. But a considerable reserve was provided in the corps of Marshal Macdonald, composed of the remains of the 5th and 11th corps, stationed about thirty leagues to his right; but his force, which was not more than 18,000 men, was a feeble counterpoise to the Army of the North, 70,000 strong. Napoleon had hoped to cover this frontier by the garrisons of Dresden and Hamburg, which were, taken together, of equal strength; but the insane policy of retaining everything deprived him of this resource till it was too late, and lost France 70,000 veteran soldiers at a time when the whole armies that could be collected for her defence hardly amounted to a greater force. It will immediately appear how important a part Sir Charles Stewart played in the measures which deprived the Emperor of those powerful reserves, which, if thrown into the scale at the decisive moment, would probably have altered the whole fate of the war.[1]

18. Measures for the defence of Flanders, Holland, and the northern frontier.

[1] Thiers, xvii. 69, 70; Koch, i. 47-49.

The principal reliance of Napoleon for resisting the numerous enemies who were preparing to invade his territories on all sides was on the Guard, that formidable body whose discipline and valour had determined the issue of so many other battles. But that body itself was almost as much reduced as the other corps of his army; its infantry consisted only of 12,000 men, its cavalry of 3500 —the poor remains of 48,000 of the former, and 12,000 of the latter, which four months before had crowded the

19. Reorganisation of the Guard, and entire forces of the Emperor.

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banks of the Elbe. The Emperor made the greatest possible efforts to restore its strength, and for that purpose he intrusted its reorganisation mainly to General Drouot, who, with no other formal appointment than the modest one of aide-de-camp, really exercised in reality great part of the duties of war minister for the Guard. His indefatigable energy, calm determination, distinguished military talents, as well as integrity of mind, raised him to that consideration in moments of difficulty with the Emperor, which the simplicity and military frankness of his manners rendered him little capable of securing in the precincts of a court in ordinary times. With the assistance of this able coadjutor, Napoleon expected to raise the Guard, including the cavalry, artillery, and engineers, to 100,000 men; but it never reached a half of the number, and they were procured with extreme difficulty, and only by drafts from the regiments of the line, which went far to destroy their efficiency. The vivid and sanguine temperament of the Emperor led him to hope that he would have 100,000 of the Guard and 200,000 of the line in the field by the beginning of February. He never had, in point of fact, above 90,000; but with these he did such great things that little doubt can remain, that if the force he hoped for had been raised, he would have proved victorious over all his enemies. If the 80,000 old soldiers under Suchet, engulfed in the garrisons of Spain, had been united to the standards of Marshal Soult, and brought up for the defence of the capital, the Allies never would have approached it; if the 90,000 lost in the garrisons of the Elbe had been brought into the field, the French troops would have marched in triumph to Munich and Berlin.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 71-79.

20. Treaty of Valençay with Ferdinand VII.

Sensible, when it was too late, of the enormous fault he had committed, when threatened in his vitals by a powerful enemy, in leaving his best troops uselessly scattered in blockaded fortresses all over Europe, Napoleon at length brought himself to propose terms of accommodation to two of his enemies whom he had long held in captivity. The

first of these was Ferdinand VII. of Spain, who had been retained a prisoner in France, at Valençay, ever since his treacherous seizure, in 1808, by Napoleon, at Bayonne. To that monarch the Emperor, by a secret emissary, proposed terms of peace, which, being regarded as a snare, were at first viewed with extreme suspicion by him; but having at length been convinced of their sincerity, he eagerly embraced terms which promised him restoration to freedom and a throne. There was no difficulty in arranging the terms when the sincerity of the offer was first trusted in. Ferdinand and his brother Don Carlos, with all their followers at Valençay, were to be restored to liberty; prisoners were to be restored on both sides; the Spanish armies were to withdraw from France, and *the English to be constrained to evacuate Spain.* This last condition, which would doubtless have been a great stroke for Napoleon if carried into effect, was rendered nugatory by the Cortes at Cadiz, in whose hands the Government was practically placed, refusing to ratify the treaty so long as Ferdinand remained in France. This led to a delay in the negotiation, and before the captive monarch could regain his own territories, Napoleon was overthrown.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 80-92; Bign. xiii. 89.

21. Treaty of Napoleon with the Pope, and of the Allies with Murat.

Shortly after, Napoleon, in the same view of diminishing the number, or abating the rancour, of his enemies, endeavoured to contract a treaty by which the aged Pontiff of Rome was to recover his freedom, and be restored to the chair of St Peter; but it came too late, the Holy Father would not negotiate; nor, if he would have done so, would it have made any material difference in his fortunes. At the same time M. de Metternich entered into a secret correspondence with Murat, the object of which was to induce him to abandon his brother-in-law and protector, and take part with the Allies, who guaranteed him in that event the retention of his throne of Naples. The virtue and honour of Joachim were not proof against so tempting an offer; he did not imitate the example of Eugene, to whom, as already mentioned, a similar offer had been

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made. After much hesitation, and passing some time in a state of cruel anxiety, he added another to the many proofs that history affords, that "the *man* that deliberates is lost." He at length entered into conferences with the Austrian envoy, and turned a willing ear to the hopes held out to him that a still more brilliant prospect might open to him, and that, by taking advantage of the desire, which was already strongly manifested in Italy, to form a united state of the whole Peninsula, independent alike of France or Austria, he might put the diadem of all Central and Southern Italy on his brow. Informed, in spite of all the care taken to keep it secret, of what was going forward, Napoleon despatched Fouché to Naples to endeavour to counteract the Austrian influence by the exhibition of an equally attractive object of ambition in the event of his remaining faithful to him. Murat's plan, proposed by him to Napoleon, was to divide Italy into two separate kingdoms, divided by the Po; the whole to the north of that river to be the appanage of Prince Eugene; all to the south to be the enlarged kingdom of Naples awarded to himself. The proposal did not surprise Napoleon, to whom adversity had taught the general selfishness and baseness of human nature; but he was not disposed to accede to it. "That man," said he, "is at once guilty and mad. He is making me lose Italy, perhaps more, and he will ruin himself. You will see that one day he will be obliged to come to beg of me an asylum and bread; but I shall live long enough, I hope, to punish his monstrous ingratitude." No answer, accordingly, was returned to the proposal of Murat, and the consequence was, that he threw himself into the arms of the Allies, and brought his ingratitude to the culminating point by fulminating an angry proclamation against the French Emperor, and appearing in the rear of Eugene on the Po, with the whole military strength of his kingdom, in alliance with the Austrians.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 99-107.

These events, how important soever, and decisive as

22. State of the Allied forces on the Rhine and in Germany.

they might have been in any former war, were of comparatively little importance in this. It was on the Rhine that the decisive blow was to be struck; it was by the armies of Germany and Russia that the deliverance of Europe was to be effected. If they were victorious, it mattered little what allies were lost or won in Italy or Spain; if defeated, no triumphs, how brilliant soever, on the Alps or Pyrenees, could lead to the desired result. It is time, after having given a rapid sketch of the situation of France in this crisis of its fate, to take a survey of the strength and condition of the Allied forces, by whom the contest was to be maintained. They were estimated by Sir Charles Stewart at 771,000 men, independent of Wellington's army in the south of France; and his estimate, being founded on what the Allied powers were bound to furnish by existing treaties, is doubtless correct, so far as the forces on paper are concerned.* But from this large force must be deducted a fourth for the usual amount of sick, absent, and non-effective, and at least as many for killed or wounded since the treaties binding the powers to furnish forces to that amount were signed; so that if 360,000 men were now forthcoming for the war in Germany, Italy, and the Rhine, it is probably as many as could be relied on. Eighty thousand of these were under Bernadotte in the north of Germany, and 60,000 in Italy fronting Prince Eugene, so that 220,000 were alone left, in the first instance, for the invasion of France by Switzerland and the Rhine; and as 20,000 of these were absorbed in blockading the fortresses still held by the French, and guarding convoys and keeping up the communications, not more than 200,000 could be relied

* Viz.—Lesser German States, . . . . 291,120 men.
Russian troops by treaty, . . . 150,000
Prussian by do., . . . . 150,000
Austrian by do., . . . . 150,000
Swedish by do., . . . . 30,000
Total, . . . . 771,120

—LONDONDERRY, 219.

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on for immediate active operations in the field, of whom 70,000 were destined under Marshal Blucher to invade France by Coblentz and Mannheim, and 130,000 under Prince Schwartzenberg to enter by the more undefended frontier of Switzerland and the Jura. On this line the only considerable fortress which obstructed the invasion was Huningen; but it was powerfully sheltered by the respect entertained by all the Allied powers, and especially the Emperor Alexander, for the Republic of Switzerland, the neutrality of which required to be violated before France was entered by the Allied forces crossing the Rhine by the bridge of Bâle.[1]*

[1] Lond. 216-221; Thiers, xvii. 130, 131.

23. Sir Charles Stewart with Bernadotte in north of Germany.

While the world was in suspense as to the invasion of France, and had hardly recovered breath after the shock of Leipsic, Sir Charles Stewart, though the accredited ambassador at the Court of Prussia, remained attached to Bernadotte's army, with whom, notwithstanding the mili-

* The following is the estimate of the forces with which the Allies invaded France, according to the best informed authorities on the opposite sides; Lord Burghersh, afterwards Earl of Westmoreland, the military commissioner of Great Britain at the Court of Austria, and M. Thiers:—

I. Austrian account, from Plotho's Original States—

| | |
|---|---|
| Grand army under Schwartzenberg, | 261,650 |
| Blucher's army, | 137,391 |
| Bernadotte's do., | 174,000 |
| Austrians in Italy, | 80,000 |
| In the field, | 653,041 |
| Russian, Prussian, and Austrian reserves, | 235,000 |
| Total, | 888,041 |

Of which 400,000 in the field, and 150,000 in reserve, might be reckoned on as effective.—*See* PLOTHO, vol. iii. appendix, and SCHOELL, x. 381-383.

II. French account, according to M. Thiers—

| | |
|---|---|
| Under Schwartzenberg, | 160,000 |
| Under Blucher, | 60,000 |
| In Italy, | 70,000 |
| Under Bernadotte near Hamburg, | 80,000 |
| Total, | 370,000 |

But as Bernadotte's army was engaged with the Danes in Holstein, and Davoust in Hamburg, not more than the 220,000 of Schwartzenberg's and Blucher's armies could be relied on for the invasion of France, and first operations of the campaign.—THIERS, xvii. 130, 131. It is known now that the Austrians, even in their official accounts, sought to dazzle the world by a somewhat exaggerated account of the Allied force.

tary frankness of his remonstrances, he was a personal favourite, and by whom, with great good sense and good taste, notwithstanding their late differences, he was invested with the Swedish Order of the Sword. His vigilant eye and intrepid spirit were much needed to keep a watch on the movements, now become more than suspicious, of that Prince. Alexander openly supported him; and it was chiefly by his influence that, after the general dislocation of the armies which followed the battle of Leipsic, he received the general command in the north of Germany, where much still remained to be done. His orders were to reduce Hamburg, and make prisoners of Davoust's army, which occupied that city, force the Danes into submission, and then lead his troops into Holland, where it was expected a counter-revolution would break out, and, with the accumulated forces of his own and their troops, invade Flanders and the north-eastern provinces of France. The task was great and the career brilliant; but the forces at his command were equal to it. His troops, nominally 137,000, really amounted to 80,000 effective men in the field; but they were veteran soldiers, inured to war, and flushed with the triumphs of Dennewitz and Leipsic; and such was the ardent spirit of the whole north of Germany, that the recruits and landwehr constantly swelling the ranks, not only supplied all casualties, but formed a force perfectly adequate to keeping up the communications and blockading fortresses in the rear, without any deduction from those in front.[1]

[1] Lond. 214-219; Thiers, xvii. 129, 130.

24. Bernadotte concludes a convention with Davoust, securing his return to France.

Fortune threw in the way of Sir Charles Stewart at this juncture an opportunity, of which he was not slow in availing himself, of rendering the most essential service to the Allied cause in the north of Germany. The Crown Prince, following out his separate interests instead of obeying his orders, took upon himself to direct the greater part of his forces against Holstein, in order to compel Denmark to agree to the cession of Norway, the great

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object of his ambition.* He gained, in the first instance, some successes against the Danes, to whom his forces were greatly superior; and, in order to be able to detach a larger force against them, he proposed to conclude a

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convention with Marshal Davoust, by which Hamburg was to be evacuated by the French, and the whole force shut up in it *was to be permitted to return to France.* Such a capitulation, which threatened to restore 30,000 excellent troops to Napoleon, of which in his straitened circumstances he stood much in need, would have been of the utmost importance to him, and very probably would have changed the fate of the campaign. Sir Charles Stewart, accordingly, who, although accredited to the Court of Berlin, was still officially attached to Bernadotte, in order to constrain him by the influence of England to act up to his engagements, no sooner was informed of the intention to conclude this convention than he remonstrated against it personally in the strongest terms, and Bernadotte promised to execute no such convention without his concurrence. Sir Charles, however, having been summoned to Frankfort by the Allied sovereigns, he had no sooner set out than Bernadotte sent orders to General Walmoden *to agree to such a convention,* in direct violation of his promise. No sooner was Sir Charles informed of this than he addressed a letter to the Crown Prince, re-

* "I think that Thornton does not see sufficiently strongly that the Prince Royal, by his miserable skirmishes in Denmark (notwithstanding they cut a figure in bulletins), and his negotiations and armistices, &c., paralyses a corps of 80,000 men, and advances not an inch to the great game in view. I shall be very determined with him, and get categorical answers. But it is wonderful how he imposes on people around him. I hope to get the Hanoverian corps and Walmoden here: after all that's happened, I shall demand this peremptorily. The Danes are really playing a ridiculous game; and what a little mind Charles Jean has!"—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *private, December* 23, 1813; *Castlereagh Correspondence,* ix. 109. "His Royal Highness (Bernadotte) expressed himself much discontented at the idea of ordering his Swedes to be so much divided, and complained generally of the little consideration shown him in this instance. He appeared to entertain great horror at the idea of the Cossacks entering France; he was more than ever anxious to rouse the people of that country whom he loved, against their ruler whom he abhorred. He wrote a proclamation, perfect in most respects, except when he dwelt on himself and his own exploits."—LONDONDERRY, 207.

monstrating in the most decided manner against it; and he had authority enough, much against the will of the latter, to get the proceeding stopped. This wise and energetic course had the effect of preventing the convention altogether, and Davoust was ultimately obliged, by the fall of the French empire, to surrender at discretion with all his forces.* Thus was the selfish design of the Crown Prince again thwarted by the intrepid and manly conduct of the British minister, and an auxiliary force wrested from Napoleon, which, if thrown into the scales when they hung, as will immediately appear, almost even on the plains of Champagne, might have rendered nugatory all the efforts of the Allied powers for the deliverance of Europe.[1]

[1] Lond. 210, 211; Thiers, xvii. 120, 121.

25. Which leads to a counter-revolution in Holland.

The important advantage thus gained by the vigour and moral courage of Sir Charles Stewart, was soon followed by another directly flowing from it of hardly less importance. Hamburg being blockaded, and the Danes being compelled to submit, Bernadotte had no longer any excuse for retaining his whole forces in inactivity in Westphalia and the north of Germany; and he was constrained to obey his orders to detach a portion, at

* The letter addressed by Sir Charles Stewart to the Crown Prince on this occasion was as follows:—

"HANOVER, 16 *Novembre* 1813.

"MONSEIGNEUR,—Permettez moi de vous addresser deux lignes au moment même de mon départ; le sujet est selon moi d'une grande importance, et j'ose croire que Votre Altesse Royale me permettra d'exprimer les sentimens de la Grande Bretagne sur une considération militaire dans laquelle elle doit prendre le plus grand intérêt. Selon toutes les probabilités, le Danemarc sera avec nous et le Maréchal Davoust perdu. S'il retournoit en France par aucune capitulation, je prévois la tache la plus funeste à la gloire militaire de l'Armée du Nord: ce serait de transporter ce corps de Davoust d'un endroit fatal où il sera perdu et de le mettre encore en bataille contre les Alliés. Mon Prince! vous m'avez comblé de bontés; soyez bien persuadé c'est à votre gloire, à vos intérêts personnels, que je pense. Je repondra si de l'opinion de mon pays. C'est avec une peine sensible que je viens d'entendre, d'après la manière que Votre Altesse s'est exprimée envers moi, hier au soir que le Général Walmoden a reçu de nouveaux ordres à cet effet. Pardonnez moi, je vous en supplie, si je me suis porté trop loin. Je n'ai fait que mon devoir en réitérant les opinions de mon gouvernement; et désormais, je laisse tout avec confiance à votre sage et digne décision. J'ai l'honneur d'être de Votre Altesse Royale le plus dévoué des serviteurs, CHARLES STEWART, *Lieut.-Général.*"

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least, of his army towards the Dutch frontier. He was, however, to the last degree reluctant to participate in any actual invasion of the French empire, for fear of injuring the prospects of succeeding to its throne which he had never ceased to cherish since the half promise of being promoted to it on the fall of Napoleon, already mentioned, made to him by the Emperor Alexander during the conference at Abo in 1812.[1] He did not approach the Dutch frontier accordingly with any considerable part of his great army, but merely detached General Bulow with his corps towards it. The mere rumour, however, of the approach of this auxiliary force had the effect of producing a counter-revolution in Holland, attended with the most important results to the Allied cause. General Molitor, who commanded the French forces in that quarter, had only under his orders a motley assemblage of 6000 men, composed of Swiss, Spaniards, Russians, Prussians, and Austrians, with only 3500 French, and little reliance could be placed on the fidelity of the auxiliary force. Unable to face the corps of Bulow, which was greatly superior, in the open country, the French General withdrew his force from Amsterdam, and stationed it at and near Utrecht to guard the important line from Naarden to Gorcum. No sooner did the French troops withdraw than a crowd assembled in the streets, shouting "Orange Boven!" and bearing aloft the flag of that much loved house. In the twinkling of an eye the counter-revolution was effected, the barracks of the douaniers and police burned, and provincial authorities in the Allied interest everywhere established. This example was speedily followed in Leyden, the Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht, and all the cities of Holland. Everywhere the French authorities were dispossessed and the Dutch ones re-established; and the whole fleet, excepting that of Admiral Missiessy in the Scheldt and Admiral Verhuel in the Texel, hoisted the Dutch colours. Shortly after the Prince of Orange made his entry into Amsterdam, in the midst of the unanimous

[1] Ante, ch. vii. § 57.

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transports of the people, who excited unanimous admiration in Europe by their exclaiming after long live the Prince of Orange, the words, "What is past is forgotten and forgiven." To take advantage of this propitious movement, which he had reason to believe was in a great measure shared in Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges, and other cities of the Low Countries, Lord Castlereagh proposed to the British Cabinet to send 6000 men, under Sir Thomas Graham, who had recently returned loaded with laurels from the Peninsula, to the Scheldt, which was immediately done, and led to important results.[1] At the same time, he transmitted such vigorous remonstrances, at the instance of Sir Charles Stewart, to the Emperor Alexander, as to the conduct of Bernadotte, who openly boasted that he was no longer to follow in the wake of the Allies, but would pursue his own designs against Denmark, that the latter sent positive orders to him to abandon his separate hostilities against Denmark, and draw near with his great army to the Low Countries. Bernadotte did not venture to disregard altogether the distinct orders of his patron, by whom he expected to be elevated to the throne of France; and he was obliged to move towards the Flemish frontier. He did this, indeed, as tardily as possible, and with the utmost desire to keep his troops out of action; but still they were, much against his will, brought nearer to the scene of strife, and part of them, as will hereafter appear, being seized upon by the vigour of Lord Castlereagh, interposed with decisive effect in the last stages of the campaign.*

[1] Thiers, xvii. 120. 123.

As much as the mind of Lord Castlereagh, ardent and

* "Les nouvelles de la contre révolution en Hollande excitait les passions Britanniques, et fit déterminer le gouvernement Anglais à décisives résolutions. Sur-le-champ on prépara des renforts destinés à la Hollande; on fit donner au Général Graham, aux généraux Prussiens et Russes l'ordre de marcher tous ensemble sur Anvers, et on adressa de vives représentations à Bernadotte, afin *qu'il cessât de s'occuper du Danemark, et se portât avec toutes ses forces sur les Pays-Bas*, s'en fiant à la coalition du soin de lui assurer la Norvége qu'on lui avait promise. Enfin on adressa à Lord Aberdeen de nouvelles instructions relativement aux bases de la paix future."—THIERS, xvii. 124.

So sensible was the Prussian Government of the vast services rendered to

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26. Dissatisfaction of Lord Castlereagh at the terms proposed at Frankfort.

energetic, but withal calm and reflecting, was charmed with this unlooked-for counter-revolution in Holland, was he disconcerted by the terms proposed by the Allied sovereigns to the French Emperor at Frankfort, and Napoleon's reply discovered and sent to him, as already mentioned, by Sir Charles Stewart. His objection was founded on one consideration, but it was an all important one, that these terms left ungained the main object of the war, which was "*security for the future.*" By leaving to France the line of the Rhine, which included Antwerp, the Scheldt, and Flushing, as well as the whole of Flanders, the grand object of his ambition was secured to the French Emperor, for he was maintained in a salient point from whence he could at any time menace the independence of Great Britain. It was the same thing to England as it would have been to Russia, if France was left in possession of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, or to Prussia if Saxony and Magdeburg were left in the hands of the French. The instructions to Lord Aberdeen had left him at liberty to adhibit the adhesion of Great Britain to the terms proposed at Frankfort, if they met with the concurrence of the other Allied powers, even though it had been from the first evident that the interests of England had been less consulted than those of the other powers in the terms of accommodation then proposed. But since these terms were offered in the middle of November, the march of events had been so rapid as to call for a change in the conditions that were to be insisted on. The long delay of Napoleon, from November 16th to December 2d, in making any answer to the basis proposed by the Allies, sufficiently proved that he was striving only to gain time, and had no real intention of coming to an accommodation. Add to this, the counter-

the common cause by Sir C. Stewart in thus bringing forward Bernadotte at so critical a juncture to take part in the important operations on the Rhine, that on December 4th, after he had come up from the Army of the North to Frankfort, agreeably to his orders, Prince Hardenberg transmitted the orders of the black and red eagle of Prussia, with the letter already given.

revolution in Holland, and known ferment in the Belgic provinces, which afforded reasonable grounds for the hope that Mr Pitt's favourite project of uniting Flanders either to Prussia or Holland might at length be realised, and its splendid fortresses, instead of being the outworks of France against Europe, might be the barriers of Europe against France. Influenced by these views, Lord Castlereagh's instructions to Lord Aberdeen, his ambassador at Frankfort to the Austrian Court, underwent a considerable modification; and he directed him to urge a continuation of the war, unless France was restricted to the limits of 1790, and the clause proposed regarding the maritime rights was withdrawn. He was instructed, however, to make no demands for the dethronement of Napoleon, or any change either in the dynasty or form of government in France; alleging as a reason, that having once undertaken to treat with Napoleon as Emperor of the French, there would be a dishonourable breach of faith in urging any conditions inconsistent with that position. In the event of the fleet at Antwerp falling into the hands of the Allies, he offered on the part of the British Government to purchase it from them; and Lord Aberdeen was instructed in particular to assure M. de Metternich of the disposition of the British Cabinet to support Austria in every reasonable demand, and in return to press upon the Cabinet of Vienna the formation of a powerful state in the Low Countries extending from the Texel to Brussels, and including Antwerp.[1] *

[1] Lord Castlereagh's instructions to Lord Aberdeen, Nov. 13, 1813, MS., and Cast. Cor. ix. 74; Thiers, xvii. 125, 126.

The result showed that Lord Castlereagh had correctly

* These important instructions, which had so material an influence on the ultimate issue of the contest, were as follows:—"I trust we may feel assured from the last accounts that Metternich has no idea of a suspension of hostilities pending negotiations, even should a basis be agreed upon. Either of these expedients is deprecated here in the strongest manner. The former is now happily out of the question, by the act of the Dutch nation, to which we are parties; and the offer made by France, in August, to negotiate without a suspension of arms, renders it easy to decline a proposition which would protract discussion till the armies of France were again prepared to take the field.

"You will not be surprised to learn after such a tide of success that this nation is likely to view with disfavour any peace which *does not confine*

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27. Which are generally acceded to by the Allied Cabinets.

divined the "form and pressure of the times," and the disposition of the Allied Cabinets in proposing to them these modifications of the Frankfort proposals. Ideas were much changed since these terms were forwarded by M. de Saint Aignan to the French Emperor. The modifications of the British Foreign Minister soon commanded universal assent. The Emperor Alexander was fired by the idea of entering Paris in triumph and avenging the conflagration of Moscow by the capture of the French capital. Count Pozzo di Borgo, a Corsican by birth, and a determined enemy of Napoleon, who had great influ-

*France within her ancient limits.* Indeed peace with Buonaparte on any terms will be far from popular, distrusting, as the people naturally do, his submitting to his destiny for any length of time; but you will perceive that these opinions have not turned us from ourselves. We still are ready to encounter with our Allies the hazards of peace, if peace can be made on the basis proposed *satisfactorily executed;* and we are *not inclined to go out of our way to interfere in the internal government of France,* however much we might desire to see it placed in more pacific hands. But I am satisfied we must not encourage our Allies to patch up an imperfect arrangement. If they will do so we must submit; but it should appear in that case to be their act, not ours. I am aware that the internal difficulties of the Confederacy are great; but once dispersed, to reassemble it will be impossible. We must therefore labour to render it effectual to its purpose now, and your last reports encourage me to hope that such will be the result. The revolution in Holland is itself a new feature in the war, and the fall of Dresden a great accession of strength.

"I must *particularly entreat you to keep your attention upon Antwerp. The destruction of that arsenal is essential to our safety.* To leave it in the hands of France is little short of *imposing on Great Britain the charge of a perpetual war establishment.* After all we have done for the Continent, this war they owe it to us and to themselves, to extinguish this fruitful source of danger to both. Press this as a primary object of their operations, and in order to render the value of the fleet, if taken or destroyed, more available for their present expenses, we shall be ready to pay them immediately in credit bills, which they can now realise as advantageously on the Continent as a bill upon the treasury.

"I hope my correspondence has latterly convinced you that we do justice to your exertions, and to the conduct of your Court. When we write, we both naturally take our tone from the circumstances, not as then existing, but as known to us. Thus, when I was fretting about the Elbe, and the apprehended indecision of Austria, the Allies were laying the solid foundation of all their subsequent glory, and Metternich was performing miracles both in negotiations and his armaments. You may assure him that I will not fail him in the long run, however, I may complain when the wheel is not moving. There is no preference in any quarter which ought to give him umbrage, but some management which may keep the Russians more cordially at his back. He has behaved in the most loyal manner to us since we became friends, and he shall see in our arrangement for the ensuing campaign, that we do him justice."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD ABERDEEN, *November* 13, 1813. *MS.*

ence with the Czar, did his utmost to inflame these ideas, and incessantly asserted that the example of Holland would speedily be followed in Belgium and France if the Allied standards were only advanced into their territories. The Prussians cordially entered into these sentiments, and inflamed by hatred at the French, and burning with the desire to wipe out the disgrace of Jena by planting their standards on Montmartre, their old general, Blucher, openly boasted that if they would give him leave he would penetrate with his single army to Paris. The Austrians, though more reluctantly, at length entered into the same views; and, as nothing was proposed hostile to the reigning dynasty, were not insensible to the advantages which they might derive from the distressed condition of France in regaining their ascendancy in Italy. Influenced by these ideas, the sovereigns unanimously adopted the views of Lord Castlereagh, and resolved to prosecute the war without relaxation, until terms more favourable than those announced in M. de Caulaincourt's tardy acceptance of M. de Saint Aignan's proposals were obtained. M. de Metternich accordingly, on December 10, returned a reply to the answer of M. de Caulaincourt of December 2, stating that France had been very tardy in returning an answer to the Frankfort proposals, but that, nevertheless, he would communicate it to the Allied Cabinets. No mention was made, however, of a suspension of the military movements or the arrest of the advance of the Allied troops, which was soon resumed with vigour at all points. Thus were the Frankfort proposals, which were eminently neglectful of the interests of Great Britain, indefinitely adjourned, and they were not thereafter resumed. This was a most important crisis in the war, for England now for the first time acquired the lead in the negotiation with France, which she never afterwards lost. It is impossible not to be struck with the important part which the two brothers who form the subject of this biography took in this great struggle, and it is difficult to say to which the palm in winning

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this important position for their country is to be awarded. For Sir Charles Stewart, by his energy in forcing up Bernadotte with the Army of the North, mainly contributed to the decisive victory of Leipsic and expulsion of the French from Germany. Again, by his stubborn resistance to the capitulation of Hamburg, which would have restored Davoust with 30,000 veterans to Napoleon's ranks, he essentially contributed to weaken the defences of France; and no sooner were these successes gained in the field than Lord Castlereagh took advantage of them in the Cabinet, and by boldly interposing and throwing the weight of England into the scale, stopped proposals disadvantageous to her interest, and gained the lead in the negotiation, which ultimately ended in the treaty of Paris and overthrow of Napoleon.[1]

1 Thiers, xvii. 127, 129; Lord Castlereagh to Lord Aberdeen, Nov. 13, 1813, MS.

28. Forces of the Allies, and plan of the campaign.

The forces with which the Allies could commence this fresh phase in the war, though nominally half a million of men, were in reality not a half of the number. Independent of the casualties of war and the ravages of typhus, which were in some places nearly as great as those of the French army, an immense force was absorbed in the blockade of the numerous fortresses still in the hands of the French on the Elbe and the Rhine. The army of Prince Schwartzenberg cantoned from Frankfort to Bâle, amounted to 130,000 or 140,000 men, and that of Blucher, which lay between Frankfort and Coblentz, to 70,000 or 80,000 more; and this was but a small force to attempt the invasion of a country defended by such a bulwark of art and nature as the Rhine. Of Blucher's army not more than 50,000 was composed of Russians and Prussians who had gone through the German campaign; the remainder being made up of Wirtemberg, Hesse, and Baden troops, whose steadiness in battle was yet to be proved. Counsels were much divided at Frankfort as to the course which should be pursued in invading France. The Prussians were clearly of opinion that their army should be reinforced from Schwartzenberg's to the

extent of 180,000 men, and that the push should be made across the Rhine, between Coblentz and Mayence. From thence, without attempting to reduce any of the fortresses in the triple line which there guarded France, they proposed to advance with the whole force direct on Paris. Schwartzenberg and the Austrian generals were strongly opposed to this course. They represented, and with reason, the extreme danger of getting the main invading army involved, in a network of fortresses, none of which could be reduced without a regular siege, and which, nevertheless, absolutely required either to be blockaded or taken if the communications of the army were to be kept up. To direct the invasion in this quarter, they maintained, was, literally speaking, "to take the bull by the horns." They observed that the really defenceless side of France was that from Bâle to Geneva, along the line of the Jura, where, as no hostile incursion had ever been anticipated, no defensive preparations whatever had been made. By throwing the weight of the invading army upon this quarter, and limiting Blucher's operations to a powerful diversion, the whole triple line of fortresses would be turned and taken in rear; and the Allies might advance to Paris without endangering their communications, and without the necessity of observing a single fortress, except Huningen, on their road. These considerations, which were obviously well founded, were sufficiently weighty in themselves; and accordingly they received, though with considerable difficulty, the assent of the Allied sovereigns, and it was resolved to attempt the invasion in this way. No account was taken in these arrangements of any immediate co-operation from Bernadotte's army, as it was thought that it would be sufficiently employed and usefully engaged in completing the counter-revolution in Holland, and reducing the formidable fortresses in the Low Countries which lay between that country and the French frontier.[1] The weight of Lord Castlereagh, who in this particular was entirely in accordance with Sir Charles Stewart, was thrown on these important delibera-

[1] Thiers, xvii. 130, 133, 135, 137.

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tions, in favour of the more cautious plan of operations proposed by the Austrian generals; and it was by his influence that the resistance of the Emperor Alexander, who was in favour of the bolder counsels of Marshal Blucher and his own generals, was at length, though not without great difficulty, overcome.

29. Double invasion of France from Switzerland and Coblentz.

To carry this plan of operations into execution, it was necessary to pass the bridge over the Rhine at Bâle, and in so doing violate in a corner the neutrality of the Swiss territory. The Emperor Alexander was very nervous on this subject, both from a respect amounting to veneration for those mountain asylums of freedom inspired in him by his Swiss preceptor, La Harpe, and from a dread, by an act of violence, of weakening the strong current of general feeling now setting in in his favour. He insisted accordingly on everything being done which could soothe the feelings and flatter the just patriotic feelings of the Swiss.* These precautions were attended with more than the desired effect. On the 21st December the advanced-guard of Prince Schwartzenberg presented itself before the barriers of the bridge of Bâle, and the Swiss officers in command making a pretence of yielding to irresistible force, abandoned the post, and the Austrian troops poured over in great strength. Immediately upon

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intelligence being received of this event, a revolution broke out at Berne in favour of the Allies, and the whole low country of Switzerland fronting the Jura was occupied

* "Tout en flattant, dans le sein de la coalition, le parti ardent qui voulait détruire jusqu'à la dernière les œuvres de la Révolution Française, il flattait en même temps les Polonais, les libéraux Allemands et Suisses. Il était ainsi contre-révolutionnaire avec les uns, libéral avec les autres, par calcul autant que par mobilité; cependant il penchait alors vers les idées libérales, par opposition au despotisme de Napoléon, et par l'influence de son éducation. Elevé en effet par un Suisse, le Colonel Laharpe, ayant eu à sa cour pour l'éducation de ses sœurs des gouvernantes de même origine, il avait écouté leurs supplications, y avait paru sensible, et avait déclaré qu'il ne laisserait jamais accomplir en Suisse une contre-révolution."—THIERS, xvii. 136. With all his acuteness and impartiality the French historian cannot separate the cause of revolution from that of revolutionary conquest; or see that the same principles which lead to the support of freedom in the outset of its career conduct to the resistance of democratic despotism when it has reached that stage in its close.

by their troops, who crossed the mountain frontier without resistance, as there was no French force in that quarter capable of keeping the field. An animated proclamation was published by Schwartzenberg on entering the French territory, and this was soon after followed by Marshal Blucher, at midnight on 31st December, commencing the passage of the Rhine, by means of three bridges thrown across at Coblentz, Manheim, and Mayence.[1]*

[1] Thiers, xvii. 141-143; Koch, i. 74, 82; Dan. 20, 21.

30. Immense subsidies granted by Lord Castlereagh on behalf of Great Britain to the Allied powers.

To meet the expenses of the gigantic war along the whole course of the Rhine, in Italy, and on the Pyrenees, which was approaching to its final struggle, large external assistance was absolutely required by all the Allied powers; for the resources of their own dominions were altogether incapable of furnishing the requisite supplies for the carrying on of a contest on so vast a scale and so far from home. Fortunately, here the credit and pecuniary resources of Great Britain were interposed with great and, as it turned out, decisive effect. The monetary system so wisely established by Mr Pitt in 1797, which had rendered the industry and credit of the nation independent of the retention of gold, and caused its resources to multiply almost in a miraculous manner in the latter years of the war, now sustained the whole energy and strength of the empire. Lord Castlereagh, who had now acquired the entire direction of the British Government, proposed in the Cabinet, who unanimously adopted the

* "Français! La victoire a conduit les armées alliées sur votre frontière; elles vont la franchir. Nous ne faisons pas la guerre à la France; mais nous repoussons loin de nous le joug que votre Gouvernement voulait imposer à nos pays, qui ont les mêmes droits à l'indépendance et au bonheur que le vôtre. Magistrats, propriétaires, cultivateurs, restez chez vous: le maintien de l'ordre public, le respect pour les propriétés particulières, la discipline la plus sévère, marqueront le passage des armées alliées. Elles ne sont animées de nul esprit de vengeance; elles ne veulent point rendre les maux sans nombre dont la France depuis vingt ans a accablé ses voisins et les contrées les plus éloignées. D'autres principes et d'autres vues que celles qui ont conduit vos armées chez nous, président aux conseils des monarques alliés. Leur gloire sera d'avoir amené la fin la plus prompte des malheurs de l'Europe. La seule conquête qu'ils envient est celle de la paix pour la France, et pour l'Europe entière un véritable état de repos. Nous espérions le trouver avant de toucher au territoire Français; nous allons l'y chercher."—THIERS, xvii. 142.

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proposal, subsidies on the most liberal scale to the foreign powers. It was no exaggeration, but a literal fact, that all the armies of the Continent were now arrayed in British pay against France. The subsidies to foreign powers in this year amounted to £10,000,000 sterling, besides £8,000,000 advanced to Ireland; "an astonishing effort," as Lord Castlereagh justly observed, "for a nation which had at the same time 153,000 men in arms in its own dominions, and was sustaining an expenditure which this year reached £117,000,000. The cost of the army in this year is £33,000,000, besides £4,500,000 for the ordnance; of the navy £22,000,000; and the interest of the National Debt, with the sinking fund, is £43,000,000."[1] By such stupendous and almost incredible efforts was the war sustained by Great Britain in its later stages; and in the ability to make them in the twentieth year of its endurance, is to be found the direct consequence of Mr Pitt's admirable system of paper currency established in 1797, and of the vigorous stand made by Lord Castlereagh against the fatal deviation from it, so nearly forced upon the nation by the Bullion Committee in 1810.

[1] Lord Castlereagh's speech, Nov. 11, 1813, Parl. Deb. xxvii.86,87.

31. Napoleon's measures to recruit his army, and his retreat before the invaders.

When the invasion was once fairly commenced, the energy and vigour of Napoleon appeared in the most striking colours; and on no previous occasion had his military genius shone forth with such lustre. Orders were despatched to the marshals in command on the frontier, Marshal Marmont at Mayence, Marshal Victor at Strasbourg, and Marshal Macdonald at Coblentz, to evacuate the fortresses they occupied on the Rhine; and leaving only the smallest garrisons capable of guarding the walls, to take the field with every disposable sabre and bayonet. To reinforce their feeble corps, the most active and energetic means were taken to push forward every conscript who could bear arms to the marshals' headquarters, and punishments the most rigorous inflicted on all such as were refractory, or endeavoured to

evade the service. After every exertion had been made, however, and means of coercion exhausted to force on the conscripts, the numbers mustered fell miserably short of what had been anticipated; and they, such as they were, underwent a serious diminution during the march from their respective depôts to the scene of action. Instead of 480,000 who were reckoned on, not more than 110,000 joined the depôts, and they were wasted away to 100,000 before they reached the frontier. Fifteen thousand conscripts, in addition, were by the utmost efforts poured into the battalions of the Guard, and 25,000 into the depôts concentrated in Paris; but these reinforcements were far from meeting the imminence and magnitude of the danger. To supply the deficiencies, the Emperor made the greatest exertions to augment the cavalry, by offering the highest ready-money prices for horses at the depôt at Versailles, and organised a really formidable corps of artillery at Vincennes. As a last resource, he at length, with infinite reluctance, sent orders to Soult and Suchet instantly to forward 25,000 of their best troops to Paris and Lyons, and to be prepared, at the shortest notice, to follow with their whole forces for the defence of the capital. Yet, with all these efforts, the whole which the mighty conqueror, who had led 650,000 men into Russia, 500,000 into Spain, and 400,000 into Germany, could collect for the defence of France, was 60,000 men between Epinal and Langres, 15,000 between Cologne and Namur, 25,000 in the depôts at Paris, and as many coming up from the Spanish frontier. If to these are added 15,000, with difficulty assembled by Augereau at Lyons, 50,000 remaining to Soult and Suchet in the south, and 40,000 under Eugene in Italy, the whole force is enumerated on which the Emperor could rely to defend his dominions, against at least 300,000 effective men, threatening to invade them from the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees. The Emperor's orders to the commanders of these scanty corps

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were, to retire slowly by converging lines towards Paris, and to dispute every defensible position without hazarding a general affair, so as to retard the advance of the enemy as much as possible. His hope, as it had been at Dresden, was, that by the direction to one point thus given to the retreating columns, they would at length, when concentrated, or in communication near Paris, place at his disposal such a mass of combatants in a central position, as would enable him to take advantage of any fault committed by his adversaries, and strike decisive blows against their detached columns, drawing together from opposite quarters, and a much wider circumference.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 144-155; Koch, i. 47-49.

32. Meeting of the Legislative Body at Paris, and its disaffected feelings.

But while the Emperor was making these vast efforts for the defence of his dominions, and adopting, with so much wisdom and sagacity, the only plans which promised him a chance of success against the immense superiority of forces by which he was assailed, a formidable conspiracy was forming in his rear, and the angry feelings of the people, excited to the highest degree by the public calamities, were breaking down all the barriers of despotism by which they had hitherto been restrained, and like a mighty torrent threatened to sweep away the whole fabric of the Imperial Government. The Legislative Body, the meeting of which had been adjourned as long as possible by Napoleon, at length stood summoned for the 28th December, and its meeting could not by possibility be longer delayed, as many of the acts of Government, during the two months that he had conducted it entirely of his own authority, in particular all the heavy taxes imposed and in course of collection, absolutely required legislative sanction. It met, accordingly, on the 28th, but the Emperor was far from anticipating the almost unanimous burst of patriotic feeling and indignation which exploded as soon as it assembled. The feelings of the people, which were worked up almost to frenzy by the public and private calamities in which they had been involved, burst forth with inextinguishable fury, now that

they had got a legitimate channel for their expression. The deputies arrived in Paris from all parts of France, animated with the strongest feelings against the Government, to which their misfortunes had been owing, and entertaining even exaggerated ideas of the extent to which they had gone; and the inevitable ruin which awaited the country if they were not speedily arrested. The vexatious conduct of the prefects, in carrying into execution the peremptory orders of the Emperor for levying the additional taxes, and the cruel manner in which the conscripts had been torn from their homes to supply the frightful chasms of pestilence and war, had excited universal indignation. There was not a family in France that had not suffered, in the bitterest manner, from these evils; and their magnitude was, if possible, exaggerated by the pains which had been taken to insure the suppression of any mention of them. Suppressed rumour, as usual, outstripped the truth, and was made up of mingled truth and falsehood.

"Nec minus falsi tenax quam nuntia veri."

The Duc de Massa, once an upright and honourable magistrate, but grown old and infirm, was the president of this highly excited and refractory body, and little calculated either to calm its transports or moderate its excesses; and the ministerial majority which hitherto had ruled the chamber, was dissolved and overwhelmed by the surges of indignation from every part of the assembly.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 155-161.

Napoleon opened the meeting in person, in one of those eloquent and sonorous discourses, which, in the days of his prosperity, had so often thrilled the hearts of the world with admiration.* He promised to lay before them the documents relative to the Frankfort negotia-

* "Sénateurs, conseillers d'Etat, députés des départements au corps législatif, vous êtes les organes naturels de ce trône: c'est à vous de donner l'exemple d'une énergie qui recommande notre génération aux générations futures. Qu'elles ne disent pas de nous: Ils ont sacrifié les premiers intérêts du pays!

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33. Napoleon's address to the legislative body, and references to committees.

tion, and declared that nothing had been wanting on his part to secure the peace of the world. He regretted the sacrifices which he was under the necessity of requiring from his people, but reminded them of the undoubted truth, that nations have no chance of succeeding in diplomacy, but by the development of their whole force. M. de Caulaincourt would have produced all the diplomatic papers; but Napoleon was aware that a full communication of the papers relative to the negotiation at Prague would prove that the opportunity of concluding an honourable peace had then been lost, and those re-

ils ont reconnu les lois que l'Angleterre a cherché en vain pendant quatre siècles à imposer à la France. . . .

"D'éclatantes victoires ont illustré les armes Françaises dans cette campagne; des défections sans exemple ont rendu ces victoires inutiles: tout a tourné contre nous. La France même serait en danger sans l'énergie et l'union des Français. Dan ces grandes circonstances, ma première pensée a été de vous appeler près de moi. Mon cœur a besoin de la présence et de l'affection de mes sujets. Je n'ai jamais été séduit par la prosperité. L'adversité me trouverait au-dessus de ses atteintes. J'ai plusieurs fois donné la paix aux nations lorsqu'elles avaient tout perdu. D'une part de mes conquêtes j'ai élevé des trônes pour des rois qui m'ont abandonné.

"J'avais conçu et exécuté de grands desseins pour la prospérité et le bonheur du monde! . . . Monarque et père, je sens ce que la paix ajouté à la sécurité des trônes et à celle des familles. Des négociations sont entamées avec les puissances coalisées. J'ai adhéré aux bases préliminaires qu'elles ont présentées. J'avais donc l'espoir qu'avant l'ouverture de cette session le congrès de Manheim serait réuni; mais de nouveaux retards, *qui ne sont pas attribués à la France*, ont différé ce moment que presse le vœu du monde. J'ai ordonné qu'on vous communiquât toutes les pièces originales qui se trouvent au portefeuille de mon département des affaires étrangères. *Vous en prendrez connaissance par l'intermédiaire* d'une commission. Les orateurs de mon conseil vous feront connaître ma volonté sur cet objet. Rien ne s'oppose de ma part au rétablissement de la paix. Je connais et je partage tous les sentiments des Français, je dis des Français, parce qu'il n'en est aucun qui désirât la paix au prix de l'honneur.

"C'est à regret que je demande à ce peuple généreux de nouveaux sacrifices; mais ils sont commandés par ses plus nobles et ses plus chers intérêts. J'ai dû renforcer mes armées par de nombreuses levées: *les nations ne traitent avec sécurité qu'en déployant toutes leurs forces.* Un accroissement dans les recettes devient indispensable. Ce que mon ministre des finances vous proposera est conforme au système de finances que j'ai établi. Nous ferons face à tout sans l'emprunt qui consomme l'avenir, et sans le papier-monnaie qui est le plus grand ennemi de l'ordre social. Je suis satisfait des sentiments qui m'ont montrés dans cette circonstance mes peuples d'Italie. Le Danemark et Naples sont seuls restés fidèles à mon alliance. La république des Etats-Unis d'Amérique continue avec succès sa guerre contre l'Angleterre."—*Moniteur*, 28 *Decembre*, 1813; THIERS, xvii. 160-162.

garding the proposals of Frankfort would show that nearly a month had been wasted in returning an answer to them, and that during that critical time the demands of the Allies, from a knowledge of the distresses of France, had become greatly more rigorous. It was resolved, therefore, to communicate a selection of the documents, not to the entire assembly, but to a committee of five chosen from each who were to report on the subject; and the Emperor hoped, by influencing the choice of the members who were to compose these committees, to obtain the entire direction of their reports, without letting the documents themselves appear before the public. The committee named by the Senate was, to appearance at least, sufficiently compliant; for it consisted of M. de Fontanes, M. de Talleyrand, M. de Saint Marsan, M. de Barbé-Marbois, and M. de Beurnonville. But the case was very different in the Legislative Body, and it was there that the existence of a feeling decidedly hostile to the government was at once revealed. The candidates proposed by government were at once rejected, and in their room five were named, all men of talent and much respected, not under the influence of the ministry, and who faithfully represented the feelings of the great majority of the chamber. They were M. Lainé, an eloquent and celebrated advocate from Bordeaux; M. Raynouard, an author of distinction, and sincerely attached to independent opinions; M. Maine de Biran, a man of a known meditative and philosophic disposition, which Napoleon has rendered distinguished by the designation of "Idéologie;" in fine, M. de Flaugergues and M. de Gallois, men less distinguished, but not less known for their liberal turn of mind. These were independent members who, faithfully representing the feelings of the chambers, deprived the Emperor of all hope that he could so far influence them as to obtain a report at variance with the real import of the diplomatic papers laid before them, which was his true object.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 163-165.

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34. Resolution of the Committee on the subject.

The reading of the papers produced unbounded astonishment in both committees; that of the Senate accepted them without reserve, and M. De Fontanes was instructed to prepare the report, which, of course, would be entirely in favour of the Government. The reading of the documents to the committee of the Chamber of Deputies produced at first such surprise, that they requested a second reading, which was at once acceded to. The secret instructions already given,[1] which the Emperor had sent to Caulaincourt, which, in effect, nullified the general acceptance of the basis proposed by the Allies in their communications of 14th November, through M. de Aignan, *were not given.* The committee heard only the Frankfort proposals, the answer of M. Maret, of 16th November, and of M. de Caulaincourt of 2d December; and as the last was a general acceptance of the basis of the natural frontiers of France, they seemed to prove that on this occasion, at least, the Emperor had been sincere in his desire for peace. They were ignorant of the *secret instructions which entirely annulled these pacific indications,* and did not perceive, in the first moments of surprise, the importance of the long delay, from 16th November, when the proposals were received, to 2d December, when they were really answered, which proved fatal to the negotiation. Still distrustful of the secret intentions of the Emperor, notwithstanding these pacific indications, the committee proposed to annex to this report a declaration, that while they would support with the last drop of their blood his resolution to uphold the natural frontiers of France, yet there was no longer a motive nor an excuse for the further prosecution of the war, after that object was secured.* M. Lainé, who was

[1] Ante, ch. xii. § 15, note.

* "Sire, voulait-il dire, vous avez juré à l'époque du sacre de maintenir les limites naturelles et necessaires de la France, le Rhin, les Alpes, les Pyrénées; nous vous sommons d'être fidèle à votre serment, et nous vous offrons tout notre sang pour vous aider à le tenir. Mais votre serment tenu, nos frontières assurées, la France et vous n'aurez plus de motif, ni d'honneur ni de grandeur, qui vous lie, et vous pourrez tout sacrifier à l'intérêt de la paix et de l'humanité."—THIERS, xvii. 168.

the leading man in the committee, however, was with some difficulty persuaded that it would be impolitic, in the present state of their foreign relations, to bind down the Government to any such specific basis, and this difficulty was adjusted. But M. Lainé and the committee were unanimous that the opportunity was not to be lost of bringing prominently forward in their report the internal grievances of the nation; in particular the general levying of taxes without legal authority, by a vote of the Chambers; the frightful cruelties exercised in enforcing the conscription; the illegal arrests, arbitrary detentions in prison, and a variety of similar grievances, which proved how far France had departed from the objects of her Revolution, and from the principles of real freedom." [1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 169, 170.

35. Paragraph proposed by M. Lainé in the Report.

Napoleon used his utmost efforts, by means of M. d'Hauterive, to obtain a modification of the Report in these particulars; and by great exertions the intended paragraphs relative to foreign affairs were agreed to be abandoned, and those referring to internal grievances were reduced to the following very moderate sentence. "It belongs to the Government according to our constitution to propose the means the most effectual to repel the enemy and secure peace on a durable basis. These means will be effectual if the French are convinced that their blood will be shed only to defend the country and our protective laws. It appears, therefore, indispensable to the committee, that, at the same time that his Majesty shall propose the most prompt and efficacious measures for the safety of the state, the Government should be besought to maintain the entire and constant execution of the laws which guarantee to the French the rights of liberty, security, and property, *and to the nation the entire* enjoyment of its political rights. That guarantee appears to your committee the most effectual means of restoring to the French the energy necessary for their defence in the present crisis." M. de Caulaincourt united his efforts to those of M. d'Hauterive's

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to get this passage, which they were well aware would be in the highest degree offensive to the Emperor, expunged from the report, but the committee were unanimous in insisting for its retention; and so entirely was this resolution in unison with the feelings of the great majority of the Chamber, that when put to the vote, 223 voices out of 254 were of the same opinion.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 172-175.

36. Napoleon in great anger prorogues the Assembly. Dec. 31.

Napoleon expressed the utmost indignation when the report of the committee containing this obnoxious passage was laid before him. He instantly wrote out and signed a decree proroguing the Assembly. All his councillors united to dissuade him from it, and to recommend moderation, but the Emperor remained decided in his purpose. "You are all agreed," said he, "in recommending moderate measures; but is there any one among you who will insure me that these legislators will not take advantage of some day of misfortune, of which there are so many in war, to execute spontaneously, or at the instigation of some factious leaders, a treasonable enterprise? I cannot venture to hazard such an attempt. Anything is less dangerous than such an eventuality." The reading of this decree to the Legislative Body produced a profound sensation, and at once converted many who were inclined to have been submissive into bitter enemies. But the Emperor did not for one instant swerve from his fixed resolution, or abate in his haughty bearing; and next day, when in conformity with established usage, he received the Legislative Body with the other bodies of the State, he said in a voice of thunder, and with eyes flashing fire as he spoke:—[2]

Jan. 1, 1814.

[2] Thiers, xvii. 175-179.

37. Napoleon's speech on proroguing the Chambers.

"What would you be at? Is it to gain possession of power? What would you do with it if you had it? Is there one among you who is capable of exercising it? Have you forgotten the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies, and the Convention? Are you likely to be more fortunate than they were? Would you not all end by being led to the scaffold, like the Guadets, the

Vergniauds, the Dantons? Besides, what does France require at this moment? It is not an Assembly, it is not orators: it is a general. Is there one among you capable of becoming such? If there was, where is his mandate? France knew me, and gave me my commission; has it done the same to any of you? Are any of you known to her? She has twice over elected me for her chief by the voice of several millions, and there is none of you who have been elected by the suffrages of more than a few hundreds, in some narrow department, to give your sanction to laws *which I make and you do not.* I look into your titles and find no such authority. *A throne is nothing but a few pieces of wood covered with velvet.* A throne is a man, and I am that man, with my will, my character, and my renown. It is I who must and can alone save France, and not you. You complain of faults in the administration of government; in what you say there is some truth and much falsehood. If you have complaints to prefer, you should choose some other occasion for stating them, and I would myself have offered you such a one, and there, with my counsellors of state, I would have discussed your grievances, and remedied such as appeared well founded. But the explanation should take place between ourselves; *for it is in private and not in public that we wash our dirty linen.* So far from doing so, you are desirous of throwing dirt in my face. Be assured I am a man whom you may kill, but not insult. M. Lainé is a wicked man, in correspondence with the Bourbons, by means of the advocate Desèze. I shall keep my eye upon him, and upon such as I believe are capable of executing criminal designs. For the rest, I am far from distrusting you all. Eleven twelfths of you are excellent; but you have let yourselves be misled by conspirators. Return into your departments; assure your neighbours that whatever they may say to the contrary, it is against France that our enemies make war, and not against me;

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and that it is necessary that it should defend not my person, but the national existence. Soon I shall put myself at the head of the army; I shall chase the enemy from our territory, and conclude peace, whatever it may cost, to what you are pleased to call my ambition. I shall then summon you back; I shall then order the printing of your report; and you will then yourselves be astonished you could have held such language in such circumstances."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 179. 181; Hist. Parl. de France, xxxix. 460, 461.

38. His noble speech to the Senators.

The Emperor held a very different language to the Senators, a commission of whom he sent with extraordinary powers into the provinces, with instructions to stimulate the ardour, and appease, as far as possible, the complaints of the people. "I am not ashamed to confess," said he to them, "that I have been too prone to war. I had formed immense projects. I would have made France the empress of the world. I now see I was wrong. These projects were not proportioned to the numerical strength of our population. To realise them I would have required to have called the whole male inhabitants to arms; and the humanising of manners has rendered it no longer possible to convert an entire nation into soldiers. I must expiate the fault of having trusted too much to my fortune, and I shall expiate it. I shall make peace, and such a peace as the circumstances demand, and which will be mortifying to me alone. France has committed no fault, if it be not one to have been too devoted to me, and too prodigally poured out its blood in my support. Let her, therefore, have the entire glory of my enterprises; I bequeath it to her as my last testament. For myself, I reserve only the honour of showing a courage, perhaps still more difficult, that of sacrificing the grandest objects of ambition that ever presented themselves to mortal man, and of renouncing, for the happiness of my people, views of grandeur which could no longer be entertained but by efforts on their part which I shall no longer demand. Depart then gentlemen; announce to your departments that I am about to conclude peace; that I no longer demand the blood of

the French to carry out my projects, nor for myself, as my enemies say, but for the integrity of the country, and the protection of our frontiers; that all I ask is the means of expelling the enemy from Alsace, Franche-Comté, Navarre, and Béarn, which are invaded; that I call the French to the assistance of the French; that I am willing to treat, but it shall be on the frontier, and not in the interior of our provinces, desolated by these barbarians. I shall be with them as a general, as a soldier. Depart, and convey to France the true expression of my sentiments."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Jan. 2, 1814; and Thiers, xvii. 182, 183.

39. Reflections on these speeches of Napoleon.

Nothing can paint the character of the extraordinary man who now ruled the destinies of France, better than these speeches. In the first is to be seen the clearest proof of his arbitrary and despotic character, and impatience of any control on his actions or government—qualities which rendered him altogether unsuited for the checks and restraints of a constitutional monarchy. In the last is presented a noble specimen of the use which he could make of the generous affections, and the skill with which he could employ the language of self-denial and repentance to conceal the most resolute determination to persevere in error, and drain, it might be, the last drop of the blood of France in the furtherance of his passion for universal dominion. It will immediately appear from the decisive evidence of his secret correspondence and overt acts, that while holding this language to the Senators, and through them to France, he had not the remotest intention of abandoning his ambitious projects, but was determined to risk all, his crown and life, on their vigorous prosecution. He made use of this generous and noble language merely to procure the assistance from France which was necessary for their development.

40. Vast forces by which France was now assailed.

The Emperor, however, had need of all his genius and all his dissimulation to resist the dangers with which he was threatened, for the forces by which his dominions were now invaded were formidable in the extreme. Lorraine, Alsace, and Franche-Comté were inundated by the multi-

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tudes of Prince Schwartzenberg; the Rhine was passed at Mannheim, Mayence, and Coblentz, by Blucher's men; and the distant mountains of Béarn were crowded with the soldiers of Wellington. It does not enter into the plan of this work to give a detailed account of any of these military operations, as neither Lord Castlereagh nor Sir Charles Stewart was personally engaged in them, being both at the moment charged with diplomatic duties of the very highest importance at the Allied headquarters and the Congress of Chatillon. The events of the campaign, therefore, can only be considered as they modified or altered the views of the diplomatists; but in this respect their influence was great and important. Suffice it to say, therefore, that the invasion of the Allies was made with 210,000 men, of whom 140,000 were under Prince Schwartzenberg, advancing from the Jura frontier; and 70,000 led by Blucher, direct from Mannheim and the Middle Rhine. Schwartzenberg's left moved on Geneva, his centre on Langres and Dijon, and his right on Colmar; Blucher was to join him between Chaumont and Langres. The utmost which the united armies of Marmont, Macdonald, Ney, and Victor could oppose to this mass was under 50,000; and this, with 30,000 collecting at Paris, the Old Guard, under Mortier, and the depôts in the interior, and forming the reserve on which the Emperor relied for striking a decisive blow when the Allies approached Paris, formed the whole regular force on which he could rely to repel the invaders. As it was evident it was altogether overmatched, especially in the first instance, their generals carefully obeyed the orders of the Emperor, which were, to retire slowly, and impeding the enemy as much as possible, by converging lines towards Paris, where the Emperor, with the Guards and cuirassiers, would be at hand to support them, and prepared to strike, with a concentrated force, at whichever of the approaching armies presented the fairest opportunity. So literally and skilfully were these orders executed, that the French armies fell

back—Victor and Ney through Lorraine, Alsace, Franche-Comté, and over the Jura; Marmont and Macdonald over the Vosges mountains into Champagne, without any serious encounter. By these movements a third of France was abandoned, almost without firing a shot, and the Allied standards were successively seen in Langres, Chaumont, and in the environs of Metz, Nancy, and Epinal. But these retrograde movements were not accomplished without a very serious loss, and a diminution of the armed force in the field in the highest degree alarming. The conscripts, discouraged by this long-continued retreat in the depth of winter, and unacquainted with the profound design of the Emperor to counterbalance inferiority of number by a concentrated retrograde movement and the skilful use of an internal line of communication, deemed the game lost, and abandoned their colours in crowds. Nearly a third of the efficient force round the eagles was lost to the French during this calamitous retreat.[1]

[1] Cast. Cor. ix. 110-112; Thiers, xvii. 186-190; Koch, i. 80, 81.

41. Appointment of Lord Castlereagh as minister plenipotentiary with the Allied sovereigns. Dec. 28.

These important events, which evidently were bringing matters to a crisis, and accelerating the period when diplomacy would be called on finally to adjust the affairs of nations, suggested alike to the British Cabinet and the Allied sovereigns, the expedience of having some plenipotentiary on the spot, in whose talents and judgment they could thoroughly confide; who might take part in the deliberations of the Allied Cabinets; and modify his views according to the rapidly changing events in the field. It was at first thought of sending Lord Harrowby out in this important character, from an idea that Lord Castlereagh, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, could not be spared from his post in the Cabinet; and still more, from the lead in the House of Commons, with which he had been intrusted since his restoration to office in spring 1812. But upon further consideration the Cabinet came to be of opinion that, important as these duties were, they yielded in moment to that of having a confidential plenipotentiary on the spot who might be brought into contact with the Allied

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sovereigns and ministers, take part daily in their deliberations, and conclude at once on the many important matters which required to be decided on at the moment, before an answer could by possibility be received from the distant Cabinet of London. As Lord Castlereagh had been, ever since his restoration to office, the soul of the Cabinet in regard to foreign affairs, and they had now become of paramount importance, they determined upon offering the appointment to his Lordship, by whom it was at once accepted. His credentials and instructions were immediately prepared; and the foreign minister, wielding the influence, and armed with the power, of England, at the moment of its highest elevation, embarked on the 31st December, at Harwich, to join the Allied headquarters.*

* The following account of this important appointment, and the views of Lord Castlereagh on the occasion, is from the pen of the Cabinet Minister most cognisant of the fact: "Lord Castlereagh's appointment," says the Earl of Ripon, "was on an occasion which demanded the exercise of no ordinary talents; for while, to the ordinary observer, the wonderful events which preceded it, seemed to render smooth and easy the arrangements which were to follow, yet in reality the course of policy which Lord Londonderry had to pursue was surrounded with extreme and complicated difficulties. I allude to his first mission to the Continent in the close of 1813. He did me the honour to invite me to accompany him on that mission, and I travelled with him from the Hague to Bâle, where he first came in contact with any of the ministers of the Allied Powers. From thence we proceeded to Langres, where the headquarters of the Grand Army were established, and where the Allied sovereigns, with their respective ministers, were assembled. I remained with him till near the close of the negotiations which ended in the peace of Paris. During the course of the journey he communicated to me confidentially and unreservedly the view which he took of the existing state of affairs, and of the mode in which he proposed to conduct the important business with which he was charged. The real difficulties of that interesting period commenced when the great powers of Europe took the decisive resolution of conquering peace in the heart of France. It had been comparatively no difficult matter to unite them, during the summer of 1813, in the great object of driving France within the limits of the Rhine. A sense of common dangers, a recollection of national injuries, and the humiliations to which the principal sovereigns and people of Germany had been exposed; an anxiety to repair the losses they had sustained, and to regain the position from which some of them had been successively driven, led them to form an alliance which, from its extent and resources, gave every prospect of a successful result. The enthusiasm which brought them together, in pursuance of this common and animating object, supported as it was by the councils and the aid of England, worked out with singular rapidity its successful result. The first combined movement broke out in August 1813, and before the 1st January 1814, the French were entirely expelled from Germany. The minds of all European statesmen were then directed to the consideration of

Lord Castlereagh's instructions from the British Cabinet were so drawn as to invest him with full powers, and enable him to negotiate and conclude, of his own authority, and without further consultation with his Government, all conventions or treaties either for the prosecution of the war or the restoration of peace. If there never was a British statesman who left the shores of England on so momentous a mission, there never was one who departed with such extensive powers. It is no exaggera-

42. Lord Castlereagh's instructions and powers, and his reception at Allied head-quarters.

those principles upon which the reconstruction of the European edifice was to be attempted, and the foundation of its future security rested. Any one who knows anything of the history of Europe since the time of William III., and the grand alliance of his day, to the present time, may readily conceive that this was no easy problem to solve. The immediate pressure of the common danger being removed, views of individual interest necessarily grew up. Some would look to the recovery of what they had lost; some to the maintenance of what they had gained. Some would think that the best chance of a durable settlement was the restoration of everything to the state in which Europe was placed in 1792, before the war of the French Revolution broke out. Some would hold to the notion that such a return was impossible, or, if possible, unwise. Some might deem that the peace of Europe would best be preserved by the adoption of some new and more popular system of internal government in the different States; other would see in such a policy nothing but a source of future evils and general commotion. It was, in short, a state of things which could only be grappled with by a mind capable of a patient, calm, resolute, and enlightened contemplation of all the circumstances of the case—founding its views and hopes for the future upon an accurate historical survey of the past, and a practical appreciation of the present.

"In the course of our journey, Lord Castlereagh developed to me the principles upon which he conceived that the expected negotiations ought to be conducted and terminated; and I owe it to his memory to express my decided conviction that the views which he entertained were the natural and just dictates of an understanding competent to embrace all the great points of the complicated question which lay before him. It was not to be expected that, in a matter where so many separate interests were concerned, all his individual views were to be worked out; but historical truth justifies me in saying, that although some points of the final arrangement were made the subject of parliamentary criticism, the general feeling of Lord Castlereagh's countrymen was that of unequivocal satisfaction with the result; and well do I remember, as if it were only yesterday, that when he first entered the House of Commons, after his return from Paris, the whole body of the Commons of England rose from their seats upon his appearance, and greeted him with cordial acclamations. You and I well know how sensibly and deeply he felt this remarkable compliment.

"There is one circumstance connected with this period so peculiarly illustrative of his character, and of the influence he was able to acquire over those with whom he had to deal, that I cannot forbear alluding to it. In the course of our journey from Frankfort to Bâle, he stated to me that one of the great difficulties he expected to encounter in the approaching negotiations would arise from the want of a habitual confidential and free intercourse between

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tion to say that he went armed with the power of peace or war, and the sole arbiter of the terms which were to be offered to the vanquished on either side in the most terrible and momentous contest in which the European Powers had ever been engaged.* He arrived at the Allied headquarters on 18th January; and his reception there demonstrated at once the estimation in which he was held

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the Ministers of the great powers, *as a body*, and that many pretensions might be modified, and causes of irritation anticipated, by bringing the respective parties into unrestricted communications, common to them all, and embracing, in confidential and united discussion, all the great points in which they were severally interested. No man was ever better calculated to transact business himself, and to bring others to act with him in such a manner than Lord Castlereagh. The suavity and dignity of his manners, his habitual patience and self-command, his considerate tolerance of difference of opinion in others, all fitted him for such a task; while his firmness, when he knew he was right, in no degree detracted from the influence of his conciliatory demeanour. Nothing could answer more completely than this mode of proceeding; and I heard at the time, from several of the eminent men with whom his discussions were then carried on, that it conduced in every way, not less to the precision and harmony, than to the promptitude and energy, of their decision."—EARL OF RIPON *to* MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY, *July* 6, 1839, *MS.;* and *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 125, 129.

* "We, taking into consideration the urgent importance of the present crisis, which requires on many occasions a more full and immediate decision on our part than can be effected under the inevitable delay attending a direct communication between the Powers on the Continent and this Government; and the objects under discussion being of a magnitude far beyond the limits of the discretionary decision of the ordinary diplomatic representatives; and we having, therefore, determined to employ, on a special and temporary mission on the Continent, one of our confidential servants and principal Secretaries of State, fully informed of our views, and invested with full powers to negotiate and engage, in his Majesty's name, for the establishment of such arrangements as may most effectually unite all the Powers of the Continent at this crisis, so generally important to the interests, security, and independence of the whole, in common views for the vigorous prosecution of the war, and also enable him to negotiate and conclude, on behalf of his Majesty, conventions and treaties for the restoration of peace.

"We have thought proper to confide to you this most important service; and we hereby signify to you our pleasure, in his Majesty's name, that you should repair, in the first instance, to the headquarters of the Allied Grand Army, where it is understood the three Allied sovereigns are assembled, to whom you will deliver the credentials with which you will be furnished to them respectively. After possessing yourself in the fullest manner of all the information which can be supplied by his Majesty's ambassadors, or other ministers, you will propose to enter into conference with such minister or ministers of the said sovereigns, as may be appointed for that purpose, upon the great objects of your mission; and you will be furnished with full powers to enable you to enter into any treaty or engagement with all or any of the Allied Powers, or with any other Power, in furtherance of the like views."

by the Allied sovereigns and ministers, and the decisive influence which his presence and councils were expected to have at their headquarters. It has been thus painted by the eloquent pen of a hostile but impartial historian. "The British Cabinet," says Thiers, "determined upon sending the most eminent of its members, Lord Castlereagh, to attend the ambulatory congress of the Coalition, to moderate the passions, preserve unanimity, and carry out the views of England, and when they were secured, to vote in every other respect for reasonable measures in opposition to extreme resolutions. To be wise for all the world except his own country was therefore his mission, and a very natural one. He was to explain the war budget introduced by Count Pozzo di Borgo, and make use of the riches of England to make his views triumph, by throwing into the opposite balance not his sword but his gold. No man was better qualified to discharge such a mission than Lord Castlereagh. He was the elder brother of Sir Charles Stewart, accredited with Bernadotte, and one of the most active and energetic servants of England. Lord Castlereagh, descended from an ardent and impetuous Irish family, bore in his bosom that disposition, but tempered by a superior reason. In mind honest and penetrating, in character prudent and firm, capable at once of vigour and address, having in his manner the proud simplicity of the English, he was called to exercise, and did exercise, the greatest influence. He was in every particular furnished with unlimited powers. With his character and his instructions you might almost say that England itself had risen up and formed the camp of the Coalesced sovereigns. Having set out from London in the end of December, he made a brief stay in Holland to

The Hon. Frederick Robinson was appointed as Lord Castlereagh's "assistant in the execution of this special service, with full power to hold conferences, and conclude such engagements or treaties with his Majesty's Allies, or any of them, in case of your illness or otherwise, according to the directions he shall receive from you in conformity to the instructions with which you are or shall be furnished."—*Instructions to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *27th December* 1813; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 115, 116.

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give his councils to the Prince of Orange, and was not expected at Fribourg, the Allied headquarters, before the second half of January. No one before his arrival would take a line or give an answer. Every one was waiting to see him to endeavour to win him over to his side. Alexander sent a message to him, through Lord Cathcart, that he wished to be the first to converse with him."[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvii. 198-200.

While the great leader of English diplomacy was thus

* The following account of this important appointment and its consequences on the Allied cause was written at the time by a most competent observer and diplomatist, Lord Burghersh, since Earl of Westmoreland, then Military *Envoyé* at the Austrian headquarters. "The decision was taken in England to depute one of the Cabinet Ministers to represent Great Britain in the congress which appeared to be now likely to be held for the final arrangements of a secure and lasting peace. Lord Harrowby is understood to have been first thought of for this mission: Lord Castlereagh, however, undertook it, and in the beginning of January proceeded to the Allied headquarters. No measure was ever wiser or productive of more beneficial effects. Lord Castlereagh, by the manliness of his conduct, by the talent which he displayed under the most difficult circumstances, secured more solid advantages, not only to England but to Europe, than perhaps will be ever known or acknowledged. In the various changes of fortune which attended the operations of the campaign of 1814, the steady course with which he pursued the general objects of the alliance, being never led aside from either by reverses or success, placed him in triumphant contrast with others who, elated or depressed by the events of each succeeding period, would have ruined their cause as much by overstrained pretensions in one alternative as by a conduct totally the reverse in another. Lord Castlereagh is understood to have left England with instructions to negotiate for peace upon conditions honourable to France, but differing from those proposed at Frankfort, which the change of circumstances had rendered no longer applicable."—BURGHERSH'S *Memoir on the War of* 1814 *in France*, 237.

Lord Castlereagh, in a letter to Lord Liverpool of 22d January, gives the following important account of his first conference with the Allied ministers. "I have had, during the last two or three days, several hours' conversation with Metternich, Stadion, and Hardenberg. It is too soon to judge of them before I come to close quarters upon some questions of difficulty. I have every reason, however, to be so far satisfied, and they seem to feel my arrival as a valuable facility. I have had a very full and confidential conversation with Metternich on the Bourbon question. He is highly conciliated by the line we have taken, and the forbearance with which we have used the discretion given to us by his Government through Aberdeen. I am confident I shall have great additional influence over his mind on any practical question connected with this subject that may occur, from the manner in which we have conducted ourselves upon it. My opinion is, that if we meet this event in our progress as a *French* measure, Austria will not embarrass it from any family considerations, and the less so from the dread she feels of Bernadotte's elevation; but she will not speculate upon it, or commit herself upon either loose or partial grounds. She will desire always to see the public act, and to frame her decision with reference to the nature and extent and the state in which the Allied interests at the moment stand in the war. Metternich seems strongly impressed with the feeling, that to take our terms high against France we must

received at the Allied headquarters, Napoleon, on his part, yielding to the necessities of his situation, and desirous of gaining time to recruit his armies, was taking steps, without awaiting the formalities of a congress, for re-establishing negotiations. His first intention was to have sent the Duke of Cadore (M. Champagny), an able diplomatist, well known to the Austrian Government, as he had been for several years ambassador at Vienna before he was made Minister of Foreign Affairs in France. Yielding to the same considerations, however, which had induced the British Government to send Lord Castlereagh to the scene of diplomatic action, and well knowing the weight which M. de Caulaincourt's name and understood pacific inclinations would have with the exalted personages there assembled, he determined at length on despatching the foreign minister in person. M. de Caulaincourt accordingly set out on the 5th January for the Allied headquarters, and directed his steps to Luneville, a place already remarkable for the signature of the first treaty which interrupted the revolutionary war between France and Austria. Arrived at the foot of the Vosges mountains, he met the French

43. Napoleon sends M. de Caulaincourt to the Allied headquarters as plenipotentiary.

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not encumber ourselves with anything that can *bear the appearance of an initiative* on such a question on the part of the Allies. I have always felt this as applied to our own interests, and that we cannot press *our* demands to the utmost if we are, at the same time, *mixed* in a question which, in so far as relates to the internal government of France, supersedes all terms. He also thinks, for the interest of the Bourbons themselves, that it is a question of doubtful policy, to say the least, whether they would not lose more than gain from showing themselves, in the first instance, in the British camp, or in that of the Allied sovereigns. He seems to dread that great question being ineffectually stirred, and anxious that the Allies should not be encumbered with it, or responsible for it. In other respects I should not despair of his concurring with the other Allied Powers in turning any public effort the French nation may make in this sense to a good account. It is painful and not fair to the Bourbons, that *their hands should be tied while Bernadotte's are free;* but why should they not pursue their views in some quarter which does not locally and in appearance mix them with us? The Emperor of Russia, in the affairs of Switzerland, influenced by Laharpe, countenances the popular party: Austria is favourable to the ancient order of things, all happily hostile to France. Metternich has the merit of getting over the obstacle of neutrality. It is desirable these *tracasseries* should transpire as little as possible, at least to the Government of England, and *especially the Emperor's égarements about Bernadotte, which I hope to dissipate.*" — LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *Bâle, 22d January* 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 185, 186.

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armies in full retreat. The woeful countenances and pitiful condition of the men; the numerous stragglers and deserters from the ranks, especially among the young conscripts; the alarming diminution of the old soldiers, who were still clustered around the eagles; the growing audacity of the royalists, who appeared in numbers which had never been anticipated—struck him with astonishment and consternation, how much soever habituated to similar scenes during the last German campaign. He lost no time in writing to Napoleon, informing him of all he had seen, communicating the discouragement of the marshals and generals, the evidently hopeless state of affairs, and conjuring him to send him authority to sign terms of peace more likely to be acceptable to the Allied sovereigns than he had hitherto done. At the same time he wrote to M. de Metternich, expressing his astonishment at his silence, so difficult to understand after the acceptance of the basis communicated through M. de Saint Aignan, and announcing that, to cut short all delays, he had come in person to the Allied advanced posts to forward the negotiation, and if possible conclude a peace.[1]

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[1] Thiers, xvii. 194-196.

44. Embarrassment of M. de Metternich and fortunate arrival of Lord Castlereagh.

The receipt of this letter, and the arrival of M. de Caulaincourt at Luneville, occasioned no small embarrassment to M. de Metternich; for after the repeated and solemn declarations the Allied sovereigns had made of their desire to conclude peace on reasonable terms, they could hardly refuse to enter into negotiations based on the professed acceptance of the Frankfort conditions. To gain time Metternich replied that, as England was now sending its foreign minister to the Allied camp, until his arrival it was impossible to assign any place, or fix any basis, for the opening of negotiations. In reality, however, matters had essentially changed since the Frankfort terms were proposed, and the Allies were far from being unanimous as to the specific terms to be offered in pursuance of the general basis. The rapid and easy entrance

of the Allied armies into France by Switzerland, the conquest, without resistance, of nearly a third of France, the dejected state and miserable condition of the wasted armies retiring before the Austrian and Russian standards, the repeated victories of Wellington in the south, had all inflamed the imagination, and seemed to authorise the insisting on very different terms from those proposed when the Allied troops were still behind the Rhine. At the same time opinions were much divided on the details of any proposed arrangement. Alexander, who had never got over the forcible entry into Switzerland, inclined to support the liberal side on every question; while Austria inclined to the aristocratic. The former contended for the cession of Norway to Sweden, and of Saxony to Prussia, which Metternich resisted as an invasion of vested rights. The Tyrolese loudly demanded to be restored to their beloved Kaisar, while Bavaria claimed an indemnity if obliged to cede them; England insisted chiefly on founding a kingdom in the Low Countries, which might shut out France from the Scheldt and Antwerp: and Austria hesitated to sanction that erection till secured of England's support of her against Russia. Add to this that the Emperor of Austria, who was sincerely desirous, for the sake of his daughter and grandson, of preserving the throne of France for Napoleon, had lately addressed an autograph letter to the French Empress, conjuring her to intercede with her husband to accede to the terms proposed, and, in the event of his doing so, promising him his entire support in the Allied councils.* Thus, in the moment of general success, and

* "Chère Louise,—J'ai reçu hier ta lettre du 12 Décembre, et j'ai appris avec plaisir que tu te portes bien. Je te remercie des vœux que tu m'adresses pour la nouvelle année; ils me sont précieux parce que je te connais. Je t'offre les miens de tout mon cœur. Pour ce qui regarde la paix, *sois persuadée que je ne la souhaite pas moins que toi*, que toute la France, et à ce que j'espère que ton mari. Ce n'est que dans la paix qu'on trouve le bonheur et le salut. Mes vues sont modérées. Je désire tout ce qui peut assurer la durée de la paix, mais dans ce monde il ne suffit pas de vouloir. J'ai de grands devoirs à remplir envers mes alliés, et malheureusement les questions de la paix future, et qui sera prochaine, je l'espère, sont très-embrouillées. Ton pays a boule-

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amidst the greatest apparent triumphs, the Coalition was on the point of falling to pieces from the jealousies and separate interests arising from that very success. It was a singularly fortunate circumstance that at this critical juncture, when the alliance was in such danger, the obstinacy of Napoleon precluded the possibility of negotiation on practicable terms; and the arrival of Lord Castlereagh communicated to the Allied councils the weight arising from decision of conduct tempered by suavity of manners, and inflexibility of purpose guided by wisdom of thought.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 197, 198.

45. Sir Charles Stewart's account of the state of the opposite armies at this period.

The condition of the Allies in a military point of view, at the time when Lord Castlereagh first joined them at Bâle on the 18th, is well described in a letter of Sir Charles Stewart to his Lordship, dated Bâle, 17th January 1814: "Marshal Blucher has taken 3000 prisoners and 25 guns since his passage of the Rhine on 1st January. Marshal Marmont has been under the necessity of making the most rapid forced marches to prevent the Silesian army getting into his rear by the Vosges mountains. In his retreat he has broken down all the bridges over the Saone, but Marshal Blucher is pursuing him. The accounts of the confusion and disorder in France are universal. The assembling of the conscripts is very slow; those that are brought together want arms and all equipments. There seems nothing now more certain than that the Allied armies can march to Paris when they will. Two-thirds of the old French soldiers that crossed the Rhine are either dead or gone into the hospitals. All the

versé toutes les idées. Quand on en vient à ces questions, on a à combattre de justes plaintes ou des préjugés. La chose n'en est pas moins le vœu le plus ardent de mon cœur, et j'espère que bientôt nous pourrons réconcilier nos gens. En Angleterre il n'y a pas de mauvaise volonté, mais on fait de grands préparatifs. Ceci occasionne nécessairement du retard jusqu'à ce qu'enfin la chose soit en train: alors elle ira, s'il plaît à Dieu. Les nouvelles que tu me donnes de ton fils me rejouissent fort. Tes frères et sœurs allaient bien d'après les dernières nouvelles que j'en ai reçues, ainsi que ma femme. Je suis aussi bien portant. Crois-moi pour toujours, ton tendre père, FRANÇOIS." —THIERS, xvii. 200, 201.

general officers and men of experience say that no resistance can be made. Prince Schwartzenberg was still at Vesoul on the 15th. The enemy were collecting at Langres, and the Prince Marshal was preparing to attack them if they remained there, which I much doubt. He had made his dipositions for this purpose, and his forces may amount to about 165,000 men. The line he occupies, however, is a very extended one. If the enemy had force to take advantage of it in any one point with collected means, the main Russian army, under Barclay de Tolly, will be ready to support Prince Schwartzenberg's offensive movement. Detachments have been left at Geneva and Fort l'Ecluse. The Simplon and St Bernard are both occupied." [1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Bâle, Jan. 17, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 173.

46. Small amount of Napoleon's forces, and his desperate situation.

The sanguine anticipations of Sir Charles Stewart as to the rapid termination of the war, and the ease with which an advance might be made to Paris, seemed on the point of realisation by the first events of the war when hostilities were resumed. Having made his first arrangements, assembled his last reserves from all the depôts in the interior, and deeming the time come when, by a concentric retreat, he had accumulated forces so in a central position, that he might hazard a blow at his pursuers, he dispatched the Pope to Savona from his place of captivity at Fontainebleau, conferred the regency during his absence on Marie Louise, and after a touching scene in the Tuileries, where he intrusted the Empress and his son to the protection of the National Guard at Paris, set out for the army. He arrived the same evening at Jan. 25. Chalons-sur-Marne, where he encountered the crowds of fugitives who were flying before the approach of the enemy. His reception by them was varied and chilling: some exclaimed, "Vive l'Empereur!" others, "A bas les droits réunis!" (Excise). He hastened to the headquarters of the marshals, whose forces exhibited a woeful picture of the exhaustion and perils of the empire. The united corps of Victor, Marmont, and Ney only presented

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19,000 infantry and 6000 cavalry, with 120 guns. Twelve leagues to the right, at Arcis-sur-Aube, Gerard had 6000, and at Troyes, eighteen leagues distant in the same direction, Mortier commanded 15,000 of the Old Guard, horse and foot, while Lefebvre Desnouettes brought up from the rear 5000 infantry and 3000 light-horse of the Young Guard; in all 55,000 men, and they too were scattered over an extent of country sixty miles broad, and called on to make head against nearly 200,000 veteran troops, many of them the best in Europe. It is not surprising that in these circumstances both parties regarded the case as hopeless, and the subjugation of France beyond a doubt. It is true, two divisions of the Young Guard and some battalions of infantry lay at Paris, a new reserve division was organising at Troyes, and Macdonald soon after came up from the Ardennes forest with 12,000 men; but reinforcements to a still greater amount were hastening to swell the ranks of the enemy.[1]

1 Thiers, xvii. 216, 217.

47. Napoleon's plan of the campaign, and noble language.

Not so Napoleon. Without being insensible to the dangers of his situation, he clearly discerned the weak side of his enemies, and set about with consummate ability to turn it to the best account. Though the Allied forces were so numerous, they were divided. Scattered over an immense extent of country, and advancing by two roads far distant from each other, the one from Bâle, the other from Mayence, while he lay in a central position between them, he had it in his power to accumulate his forces upon either at pleasure, and strike, as in Italy in 1796, redoubtable blows, first at one and then at the other. Augereau accordingly received orders to quit Lyons and ascend the course of the Rhone to Besançon, so as to threaten the communications of the Grand Army, a point on which the Austrians, who advanced from that side, were known to be particularly nervous, while the Emperor himself prepared to assail them in front with 50,000 men. Some success would be gained in all probability in these circumstances, of which advantage might be taken to negotiate on favourable

terms. "All is not lost!" exclaimed Napoleon; "war presents so many chances of success to those who have courage to persevere! *No one is conquered till he wills to become so!* Doubtless we shall have some days of difficulty; we may sometimes be obliged to fight one against three, or even one against four; but we have done so in our youth, and we must be able to do so in mature years. Besides, out of the *debris* of the old army, we have contrived to save an excellent and noble artillery, so as to have five or six pieces to each thousand men. Cannon-shot are well worth musket-balls. We have earned glory of every sort but one; but that one remains to be won, and it surpasses all the rest—it is to be found in resisting misfortune and triumphing over it. After that, we may repose at our hearths and grow old together in that France, which, thanks to its heroic soldiers, after so many mutations of fortune, will have saved its true grandeur, that of its natural frontiers, and withal imperishable glory."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 220, 221.

48. Chatillon is fixed on as the place of congress, and near approach of the two armies.

The first events of the campaign seemed to belie these noble sentiments, or rather Fortune appeared resolved to exhaust her malevolence before she again bewitched France by her smiles. A place was at last designed for the congress at the request of M. de Caulaincourt, and CHATILLON was fixed on for that purpose; but meanwhile military operations were not suspended, and the result of the first actions seemed to justify the expectations of the Allies, and verify the worst prognostications of the French. The two armies, which had set out from such opposite quarters, were now drawing near to each other, and threatened by their united mass to crush the forces of Napoleon, not a third of their number, which lay between them. Blucher had left Nancy, and reached St Dizier; but there abandoning the direct road to Paris, he had crossed over to the valley of the Aube, in order to enter into communication with Schwartzenberg, terminate his indecision, and bring about a march with their united force on Paris. Already his advanced-guard had

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united with that of the Grand Army under Pahlen, and would soon bring to the latter a reinforcement of 35,000 men. No sooner did Napoleon hear of this lateral movement of Blucher, in a manner perpendicular to his own line of march, than he resolved with what troops he had in hand to fall on the detached corps of Blucher, which were following their advanced-guard towards the Grand Army. Blucher at this time had with him only Sacken's and part of Langeron's corps, in all 30,000 men; York's Prussians being in rear on the Moselle; and Langeron blockading Mayence. Napoleon experienced the utmost difficulty in passing the cross roads, which a rapid thaw succeeding a hard frost had rendered almost impassable; and it was only by the vigour of the artillery horses, which were in excellent condition, and the aid of some hundred peasants, who harnessed themselves to the guns, that they were at length dragged through. By great exertions, the difficult roads were traversed, and on the succeeding day, the whole force, about 20,000 strong, arrived in front of Brienne, which was in the hands of the enemy. But it was too late for the surprise which the Emperor meditated. Blucher had heard of the cross march of part of the French army, and immediately divining the Emperor's design, he drew back quickly the part of his troops which had passed on to Lesmont, and assembled nearly 30,000 men in and around Brienne. Napoleon had only 20,000, including 6000 excellent horse; but as every hour's delay would augment the enemy's forces, he did not hesitate to engage. A furious combat ensued, in the course of which great successes were gained by both sides; and what is not a little remarkable, *both* commanders-in-chief ran the greatest risk of being captured. Napoleon, who was in one of Victor's squares, when it was charged by some thousand of the enemy's horse, narrowly escaped being made prisoner, and saw a battery taken under his eyes; while Blucher, with his staff, was nearly taken in the castle of Brienne

when stormed by the French, who made prisoner a son of Chancellor Hardenberg. Though success, however, was thus varied, the advantage on the whole was on the side of the French, who, at the close of the day remained masters of the chateau and of part of the town; and the loss on both sides was nearly equal. Blucher fell back to Trannes, not on the road by which he had advanced, but in the direction of the Grand Army, whom he thus forced to come to his assistance; in so doing sacrificing his communications to secure his junction with Schwartzenberg.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 227-230; Dan. 1814, 51-56.

49. Forces on both sides. Jan. 29.

This bloody combat was of favourable augury to the French Emperor; for with forces greatly inferior, and in part made up of young soldiers, he had made head against the veteran bands of the Army of Silesia, and caused his presence to be felt by a sudden and important stroke in the very centre of the enemy's wide extended lines. But the Allies soon had their revenge, and Napoleon's prospects never looked so gloomy as they did immediately after this passing gleam of good fortune. He established himself after the combat of Brienne in the open plain in front of that town with the village of La Rothière in its centre. His reason for taking this position, which undoubtedly was very hazardous in presence of such a very superior force of the enemy, was that by so doing he preserved his central position between the two lines of invasion, followed by Schwartzenberg advancing by Troyes, and Blucher by Chalons, and retained the advantage on which he mainly relied for extrication from his difficulties, by falling with a preponderating force on one or the other. He there collected every sabre and bayonet which he could command; and the Allies, struck with the untoward issue of the previous engagement, delayed the attack till great part of the Grand Army had come up to Blucher's aid. On the morning of the 1st February, however, they were so far concentrated that it was deemed safe to hazard a general battle. Success was almost inevitable on their part, for be-

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tween the two armies 100,000 men had come up, and could take part in the engagement; and the French Emperor could not collect more than 40,000 to oppose them. Their plan of attack was for Blucher, with the united corps of Sacken, Olsoofief, and Pahlen to attack La Rothière in the French centre, which it was expected could not resist such a mass of assailants, while the Prince of Wirtemberg and Wrede, with the Austrian right, assailed Napoleon's left, between the villages of La Gibérie and Morvilliers; and Giulay's Austrians, on the Allied left, threw themselves on Dienville, where the French right rested on the Aube. The Russian and Prussian Guards were stationed in reserve close behind the centre, ready to support any part of the line where their assistance might be required. Sir Charles Stewart, who had preceded Lord Castlereagh to the Allied head-quarters, was present, and took a part in this battle.[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Brienne, Feb. 2, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 229, 230; Burgh. 249.

50. Battle of La Rothière, and defeat of the French. Feb. 1.

The action began at two o'clock with a warm cannonade on both sides, which was immediately followed by an attack by Blucher's column on the village of La Rothière, occupied by Duhesme's men of Victor's corps. Giulay meanwhile led his troops against Dienville, on Napoleon's extreme right on the Aube, which was obstinately defended by Gerard's men, and the Prince of Wirtemberg pressed his left about La Gibérie. The attack was everywhere energetic, but the defence was not less determined; and, in spite of their great superiority of numbers, the Allies for two hours made very little progress. At four o'clock Blucher, supported by the Russian and Prussian Guards, made a last attack on La Rothière, which, after being twice taken and retaken, finally remained in the hands of the Russians. At the same time the Prince of Wirtemberg, supported by the Russian Guard, penetrated into the village of La Gibérie, and the Bavarians, under Wrede, carried Morvilliers, on the extreme French left, and spread themselves over the plain beyond it to the forest of Ajou. Napoleon, seeing the day going against

him at all points, made a last effort to retake La Rothière at the head of the Young Guard, led by himself in person and Oudinot. The Guard marched with the utmost resolution into a tremendous fire, and, after a desperate struggle, succeeded in expelling the enemy from the village, part of which they held till ten at night. This effort was merely to cover the retreat, which had become necessary, as the line was elsewhere forced back. Already the French were falling back at all points, and at ten the Young Guard abandoned La Rothière, and a long and dreary winter night put an end to this murderous conflict. The killed and wounded on each side in this terrible battle was nearly equal, amounting to about 5000 to each party. But in addition to this the Allies took 2000 prisoners and 73 guns, which decisively proved that the victory was on their side. The next day Napoleon withdrew across the Aube at Lesmont, and hastened to Troyes, on the great road to Paris.[1] *

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Feb. 2, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 229; Thiers, xvii. 265-266; Burgh. 117, 118; Lond. 266-268.

This brief notice of the important military operations which took place at this eventful crisis is essential to understand correctly the still more important diplomatic transactions of the period, in which Lord Castlereagh and

* "Napoleon drew up his army in two lines before the village of La Rothière, occupying the village, and neglecting much stronger ground in the rear about Brienne, evidently showing he means to play his last stake with desperation. He led on his Young Guard himself to wrest the village of La Rothière from the gallant corps of Sacken, by whom it had been taken. But three repeated efforts were ineffectual. All agree that the enemy fought with great intrepidity. Napoleon seems to have set his life on a die, as he exposed himself everywhere, and had his horse shot under him. He had the mortification, however, of witnessing a battery of the Young Guard taken close by him. If Marshal Blucher was not long since immortalised, this day would have crowned him in the annals of fame. Whatever were the apprehensions entertained by many of the result of the Prince of Wirtemberg's attack, the Marshal steadily pursued that combination upon which the result of the day depended. This foresight, judgment, and decision, is done justice to by all the Allied army. The Russian artillery are spoken of in the highest terms of praise. The ground was so covered with snow, and so deep, that they were obliged to leave half their guns in the rear, and by harnessing double teams to the other half, they contrived to bring them forward, and get a sufficient number into action. The Allies had about 70,000 or 80,000 men in the battle. The other corps of the army, which are not enumerated in the report, were not up. The enemy are supposed to have had about the same strength."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Brienne, February* 2, 1814, *MS.*

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Sir Charles Stewart bore so great a part. When they arrived at the Allied headquarters on the field on the 29th January, the very day of the combat of Brienne, they found the Council of Sovereigns and Ministers distinctly divided into two parties; the one of which was clear for pushing the war to the utmost extremity, and not treating till Paris was in their hands, and France was not only weakened so as to be no longer formidable, but so thoroughly humbled as no longer to aspire to be so. The other was desirous of avoiding such extreme measures, and wished rather to gain time to leave the French Emperor a respite to reflect, and if possible secure the throne for himself and his descendants. At the head of the first party was the Emperor Alexander, who was fired with the desire of returning in Paris the visit paid at Moscow, and he was cordially seconded by the King of Prussia and Marshal Blucher, who were smarting under the still more serious wrongs inflicted during six years of bondage. At the head of the other party was M. de Metternich, who, naturally of a moderate temperament, inclined to diplomacy rather than war, was actuated by the desire, unavoidable in his circumstances, to secure the throne of France for the son of Marie-Louise, and felt that the interests of Austria were far from calling for the entire destruction of a power which might hereafter be required as a barrier against its gigantic and hourly increasing northern neighbour. These two parties were nearly equally balanced in point of numbers and political weight, so that it was difficult to say with which the superiority would remain. This state of matters greatly augmented the influence of Lord Castlereagh in the Congress; for he was in a manner the umpire to whom both parties looked, and whose decision would come to tell with decisive effect upon the decisions of the entire body. And his arrival at this critical moment was not only fortunate, but almost providential; for we have the authority of the British ambassador at the Austrian court for the assertion, that

51. State of the Allied counsels on Lord Castlereagh's arrival. Jan. 29.

the divisions between the Allies had become so serious, that but for that event the alliance would probably have fallen to pieces; and the diplomatists at both the Russian and Austrian courts expressed the greatest joy at his arrival. Alexander requested and arranged a private interview with him *first.*[1]* [1] Thiers, xvii. 235, 236.

Lord Castlereagh had a private meeting with the Emperor Alexander according to his desire; and in confiden-

* "With relation to the enemy, our situation is as good as possible; *among ourselves quite the reverse.* Everything which has been so long smothered is now bursting forth. *Your presence is absolutely providential.* If you come without partiality or prejudice, as I make no doubt you do, in spite of all the pains taken to prevent it, you will be able to perform everything; and no words are sufficient to express the service you will render. I am most anxious that you may come."—LORD ABERDEEN *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Fribourg, January* 6, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 142, 143.

"I hope this may meet you well advanced upon your journey, and I hasten to assure you of the great joy and delight with which I learned your intention by your private letter of the 22d. I lost no time in reporting and explaining it to the Emperor, who received a courier at the same time from Count Lieven."—LORD CATHCART *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *January* 6, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 143.

"The Emperor Alexander, before his departure, desired to see me, and expressed the great satisfaction he had felt in the confidence which was reposed in him by the Prince Regent and his Government, and particularly in expressions to that effect in several of your Lordship's (Castlereagh's) despatches; asked me with some solemnity whether the same confidence still subsisted in regard to him, and whether he was considered as engaged in this great cause with as little bias to self-interest as at least any other power. I answered that I was certain the same confidence existed, and the same admiration of the principles upon which his Imperial Majesty had acted, and which had conducted him thus far. 'If so,' said the Emperor, 'I will engage you to ask Lord Castlereagh to *see me before he sees any minister of mine or of any other power*, on the business which brings him here. We all mean and wish to accomplish the same object, but shades of difference may exist as to the means; and we claim, as the power with which Great Britain has acted throughout all this business, to deliver our sentiments to the British Cabinet minister *first.*' He expressed great satisfaction at your appointment. He said that he would not ask me to propose this to you in my own name, as he did not wish to lead me into any negotiation separate from Lord Aberdeen or Sir Charles Stewart, but that I should deliver *his* message confidentially from himself to your Lordship, and I have delivered it accordingly. His Imperial Majesty was aware that this would not be easy if you were to arrive at headquarters before his return, and therefore thought that you might oblige him by *not arriving* before him. I have stated this in detail that you may fully understand what is meant. The moment I have your leave after you arrive I will acquaint the Emperor, and your reception will be without any sort of form. Your Lordship's decision to come is the most fortunate event that can be conceived, and has given us all the greatest joy."—LORD CATHCART *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Fribourg, January* 8, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 148, 149.

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52. The Emperor Alexander's conversation with Lord Castlereagh.

tial communication on the subject with Lord Liverpool he explained clearly the state of affairs, and the dangers to which the Alliance was exposed from the disunion of the great powers. "I think," said Lord Castlereagh, "our greatest danger at present is from the *chevalresque* tone in which the Emperor Alexander is disposed to push the war. He has a personal feeling about Paris a part from all political or military combinations. He seems to seek for the occasion to enter with his magnificent Guards the enemy's capital, *probably to display in his clemency and forbearance a contrast to that desolation to which his own was devoted.** The idea that a rapid negotiation might disappoint this hope added to his impatience. I hope that this is abated, and that we may not suffer from his precipitancy. You may estimate some of the hazards to which affairs are exposed here when one of the leading monarchs in his first interview told me that he had no confidence in his own minister, and still less in that of his ally. There is much intrigue, and still greater fear of it. Russia distrusts Austria about Saxony, and Austria dreads Russia about Poland, especially if she is mistress of the question after peace. I have got some length with both parties upon this subject, and I shall try to deliver them from their mutual alarm. Suspicion is the prevailing temper of the Emperor, and Metternich's character furnishes constant food for the intriguants to work upon. Unless France is condescending to an incredible degree, the discussions, if they proceed, cannot speedily end. I am afraid pending negotiations are likely to give an advantage to Jacobinical and military intriguers over the more honest sentiments of the nation. The people are quiet everywhere, and good-humoured; they look upon the invasion as favourable to peace. They spoke freely against Buonaparte to me on the journey,

* A striking instance of Lord Castlereagh's penetration in discovering character, when it is recollected these words were written three months before the Allies entered Paris.

but I traced little disposition to an effort, and no apparent interest, about the old family. A retreat now would be very inconvenient. I am confident our advantages are solid, with management; but we must not undervalue our difficulties, with a line of waggons rolling night and day in our rear from Berlin, Bohemia, and Hungary, which a small corps of cavalry thrown round our flank might at once arrest, if strength is thrown too much in advance. It is right you should know my channels as to Bernadotte. They were Russian as well as Austrian, and from men who would not take the alarm without some cause. The Emperor attacked Charles (Sir Charles Stewart) in a good-humoured manner as to my informant. Charles admitted he was one, and that he had heard it from his (Bernadotte's) own people. His Imperial Majesty expressed himself, *even to him*, that 'he did *not* consider the Bourbons *as the most worthy*.'* On the other hand, Noailles and the emigrants here say the Emperor has given them encouragement, promised them not to make peace, and only desired that they might not hoist the white cockade within the Allied positions. The Emperor, on the other hand, told me that he had given them *no* encouragement; and from the marked approbation he expressed of your having given them none, I presume that this is the fact. The enclosed extract will show *you what Bernadotte's language is*."[1]

[1] Lord Castlereagh to Lord Liverpool, Langres, Jan. 30, 1814; Cast. Desp. xvii. 212-214.

53. Composition of the congress of Chatillon. Feb. 8.

The congress met at Chatillon on February 3d. The plenipotentiaries named were, for France M. de Caulaincourt, for Austria M. de Stadion, for Russia M. de Razumoffskoi, for Prussia M. de Humboldt, for Great Britain Lord Cathcart, Lord Aberdeen, and Sir Charles Stewart, the accredited ministers at the courts of St Petersburgh, Vienna, and Berlin.† Neither M. de

* A remarkable expression when taken in connection with the Emperor Alexander's words to Bernadotte at the conference at Abo in 1812, that the throne of France would be given *au plus digne* in the event of Napoleon being dethroned. *See ante*, c. vii. § 57, and WILSON'S *Russian Campaign*, p. 113.

† "MY LORD,—The Allied sovereigns having agreed to open preliminary con-

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Metternich nor Lord Castlereagh were, in point of form, members of the conference; but they both repaired to Chatillon, and it need hardly be said exercised a preponderating influence over the proceedings of the plenipotentiaries, which were daily reported to them in a series of protocols still extant, prepared by Sir Charles Stewart, from which copious extracts will immediately be given. Great was the influence, and commanding the position, of Great Britain at this time in European diplomacy. She had *three* representatives in the congress, though they were only to count as one, while no other power had more than one, and her foreign ministers shared with the Austrians the all-important position of umpire in the negotiations. But if this preponderating influence was remarkable and eminently descriptive of the high position which England had acquired by her perseverance and long-continued efforts in the cause of European freedom, still more remarkable was the place occupied in it by the one family, for two out of three statesmen intrusted with the decision of the affairs of the world were from that of the Stewarts.[1]*

[1] Thiers, xvii. 244.

ferences with the French Government at Chatillon, with the view of concluding, if possible, in conjunction with the Allies, a general peace upon just, solid, and honourable terms; and the Austrian, Russian, and Prussian plenipotentiaries having received instructions to assemble there on the 3d February next ensuing, I am to acquaint your Lordship that the Prince Regent, acting in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, has thought fit that Great Britain should be represented at the said conferences by a commission to be composed of the King's diplomatic servants accredited to the three Allied courts. I am therefore commanded to signify to your Lordship the Prince Regent's pleasure, after making a suitable explanation to his Imperial Majesty of the orders you have received, that your Lordship do repair to Chatillon on the day above named, there to receive from me your full powers, and the necessary instructions for the direction of your conduct.—I have, &c., CASTLEREAGH."
—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD CATHCART, LORD ABERDEEN, and SIR CHARLES STEWART, *Langres, 31st January* 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 215.

* The instructions of Napoleon to his representative M. de Caulaincourt were very important and eminently characteristic of his temper and dispositions at this period. "It appears doubtful whether the Allies really wish for peace. I desire it, but it must be solid and honourable. France *without its natural limits, without Ostend, without Antwerp*, would be no longer on a level with the other powers of Europe. England and all the Allied powers have recognised at Frankfort the principle of giving France her natural boundaries. The conquests of France within the Rhine and the Alps can never compensate

54. Views of Lord Castlereagh on the negotiations.

The first and most important question which presented itself to the determination of the Allied sovereigns was, whether negotiations should be carried on with Napoleon on the footing of a consent to his remaining on the throne, or an attempt should be made to substitute in his room the expelled family of the Bourbons. Lord Castlereagh was decidedly of opinion that the negotiation should be continued with Napoleon without any attempt to displace him, on the ground that although the restoration of the "ancient race and the ancient territory," as he expressed it, presented the most reasonable prospect for preserving the peace and independence of Europe, yet having once begun negotiations with the French Emperor, good faith required that they should not be broken off, and that it was contrary to the principles of the British constitution to carry on war to force any particular dynasty or form of government on a reluctant people. This was so notorious at the time that it is admitted by

what Austria, Russia, and Prussia have gained in Italy, Finland, Poland, or England in India. The policy of England, the hatred of the Emperor of Russia, will carry away Austria. I have accepted the basis announced at Frankfort, but it is probable that by this time the Allies have other ideas. Their negotiations are but a mask. The moment that they declared the negotiations subject to the influence of military events, it became impossible to foresee the probable issue. *You must hear and observe everything;* you must endeavour to discover the views of the Allies, and make me acquainted with them day by day, in order that I may be in a situation to give you more precise instructions than I can give at present. To reduce France to her ancient limits is to degrade it. They are deceived if they suppose that the misfortunes of war will make the nation desire such a peace. There is not a French heart which would not feel degraded before the end of six months, and which would not make it an eternal object of opprobrium to the government which should be base enough to sign it. Italy is untouched: the Viceroy has a fine army; in a few days I shall have assembled a force adequate to fight several battles, even before the arrival of the troops from Spain. If the nation seconds me, the enemy is marching to his ruin; if fortune betrays me, my part is taken. I will not retain the throne. I will neither degrade the nation nor myself by subscribing degrading conditions. Try and discover what are Metternich's views. It is not the interest of Austria to push matters to extremities; yet a step, and the lead will escape him. In this state of affairs there is nothing to prescribe to you. Confine yourself in the first instance to hearing everything, and inform me of what is going on. I am on the eve of joining the army. We shall be so near that scarcely any delay will occur in making me acquainted with the state of the negotiations."—NAPOLEON *to* CAULAINCOURT, *January* 24, 1814; CAPEFIGUE, x. 369, 370.

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the best informed French historians themselves. "The question of dynasty," says M. Thiers, "was a difficulty for Lord Castlereagh as well in reference to England as to Austria. Reproaches had so long been thrown in Parliament on the ministers, the successors of Mr Pitt, for sustaining against France a war of dynasty, that they had ended by abjuring it themselves even when the English people, intoxicated by success, might have been inclined to have enforced such an object. As to Austria, it would sadly embarrass its emperor to say that the Allies were leading him to Paris to dethrone his daughter. Even if the fact of the throne of France becoming vacant afforded a hope to Lord Castlereagh to see the Bourbons reascend the throne of France, which he in secret ardently desired, it gave too much reason to fear something from Bernadotte, in favour of whom the Emperor Alexander was strongly inclined since the interview at Abo, and the proposed cession of Norway to Sweden.

55. Continued.

"For these reasons Lord Castlereagh wisely determined that nothing should be precipitated, and to allow the restoration of the Bourbons, if it should alone spring from the force of circumstances, and *to make no attempt to aid their influence by the coercion of men.* He held out to both parties that they had publicly offered to negotiate with Napoleon, and that to refuse now to send plenipotentiaries not only to Manheim, the place suggested by France, but even to Chatillon, a place proposed by the Allies, would be to place themselves in a grievous state of embarrassment, which would be instantly taken advantage of in England. That on this account it was indispensable to negotiate with Napoleon: that there was a debt of honour due to the dignity of all the powers. To the Emperor Alexander, who was so desirous to go to Paris, he represented that in acting in that way he did not undertake any very serious engagements; for in offering to Napoleon purely and simply the frontiers of 1790 they were sure of a refusal, and that even if he accepted

these terms, they would have annihilated and weakened him to such a degree that some would be avenged, others secured: and that, if he declined to treat on these terms, then all engagements would be at an end, and in that case Austria, bound to stand out for the frontiers of 1790, would be under the necessity of abandoning an impracticable son-in-law, with whom all accommodations had become impossible. That in this way, by simply pressing nothing, they could arrive at the point which all desired without alienating the Court of Vienna, whose support in the present state of affairs could not be dispensed with." These wise and convincing reasons prevailed with the Allied sovereigns, and they agreed, contrary to the declared wishes of Russia and Prussia, to go on with the negotiations without insisting on the abdication of Napoleon as a preliminary condition.[1]*

[1] Thiers, xvii. 238, 239; Lord Castlereagh to Mr Thornton, Feb. 8, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 245-249.

* The same views were fully and clearly enumerated in a letter from Lord Castlereagh to Mr Thornton, the accredited minister at the Court of Sweden, and then with Bernadotte. "You will not disguise from the Prince Royal the disappointment or rather dissatisfaction which was produced by his Royal Highness's movements with the great mass of his forces to the Elbe instead of the Rhine, as he undertook to do when at Leipsic; the effect of which divergence from the main operation was to put the enemy in a situation to defend the Dutch fortresses and the Low Countries, which must have otherwise fallen without a blow. You may state that your Court could have the better reconciled themselves to this departure from the understood principles upon which the campaign was to be conducted, if the necessity of it, on any grounds of Swedish policy, had been openly avowed, and if the various assurances transmitted through you, that it was not his Royal Highness's intention to conquer Norway in Holstein, *had not proved successively illusory*. Having done justice to the grounds on which your Court could not conceal their dissatisfaction, you will acquaint the Prince Royal that the British Government is not the less disposed to cultivate an intimate union with Sweden; that they rejoice in the prosperous result of his Royal Highness's campaign; that they have cheerfully made the sacrifices to Denmark necessary to secure the cession of Norway to Sweden. With respect to the Prince Royal himself, you may assure him that they are willing to give to what is past the most favourable construction, and to concert their views, with respect to the future interests of both states, cordially with his Royal Highness.

"You may state to the Prince Royal that their first wish is that his Royal Highness would actually direct the force under his orders to the reduction of the military power of the enemy, being assured that the Allies have no disposition to impose upon France any terms of peace inconsistent with the honour or interests of the French nation fairly understood. With respect to the views of Great Britain and the Allies in the prosecution of the war, the four principal powers acting in the spirit of the known views of the other confeder-

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56. His representations, and entire accord with Austria.

Having surmounted this first and most serious difficulty, the next object of Lord Castlereagh was to come to a good understanding with Austria, in order to form some counterpoise to the passion for a *guerre à l'outrance* by which Russia and Prussia, from a sense of unpardonable injuries, were animated. For this purpose he had several long conferences with the Emperor Francis and M. de

ate states are engaged in preliminary discussions with the enemy, with a view to ascertaining whether France is prepared to return to a state of possession and power consistent with the security of other states, and calculated to re-establish a just equilibrium in Europe.

"With respect to the existing ruler of France (however personally calculated to inspire distrust) these discussions have been entered upon with him; so long as he *shall continue to be recognised by the French nation in that character, these discussions shall be pursued to their legitimate conclusion.* Whatever Great Britain might feel of increased confidence in signing a peace with the ancient family restored to the throne of their ancestors, *it belongs to her not to excite or originate such a change which, to be stable, must be the act of the nation;* or the result of which, involving as it must do the personal safety of individuals, as well as the fortunes of a great nation, it is not for her to make herself responsible. So far as the British Government may be entitled, without any unbecoming interference, to express an opinion or a wish upon an event of such a nature, they would most strongly deprecate a recurrence on the part of the French nation if Buonaparte should cease to rule to any intermediate system, whether of regency *or of substituting another military chief in his room.* Such a system would, in all human probability, be merely transitory, probably troubled, most certainly weak. It might again divide Europe, as apparently tending to connect France too closely with one of the great military powers, *and ultimately lead, through new convulsion, to the return of the ancient family as the only remedy to rival and conflicting pretensions.* I trust if there is to be a change that his Royal Highness, from a regard for the repose of the nation which gave him birth, would be disposed to employ his influence to give it a direction which could occasion umbrage to none of the cabinets of Europe. Such would be the effect of the return of the Bourbons. Such is *likely to be the effect of Buonaparte's dreaded authority, namely, to preserve as a defence to Europe* the system of union which has saved it. You may state that no peace is looked to by Great Britain which does not substantially reduce France within her ancient limits, and that to facilitate such an arrangement in favour of the Continent, Great Britain will be disposed to act most liberally towards France, being desirous to give such a peace stability, by rendering the arrangement at once honourable to France, and such as may promote her prosperity.

"You may also apprise his Royal Highness that it is the intention of the Allies to annex the Low Countries, at least as far as the Meuse, to Holland. *Less of territory would be insufficient to uphold the army requisite to defend her barrier, which is indispensable for her security and that of the north of Germany.* The experience of former times sufficiently proves how feeble that line of defence must be for any country which is held by confederates having clashing interests."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* EDWARD THORNTON, Esq., *Minister at Stockholm, Chatillon, February* 8, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence.*

Metternich, and they soon found that their ideas were so consentaneous that the best understanding was established between them. Lord Castlereagh represented to them, that although he feared it would be difficult to have a lasting peace with Napoleon, yet he was decidedly of opinion that they should treat with him, that England had no concern with the questions of dynasty which might arise in France, and that at this very moment she was dissuading the Bourbons from attempting a landing in France; that she would apply herself in good faith to bring about a peace, but that if Napoleon refused the terms offered him, it would become necessary to be done with him, and that, as in that case, the throne of France would become vacant, Austria, guided by a conservative policy, enlightened as to the character of Bernadotte, would prefer the Bourbons to that adventurer who sold so dear services of so little value. Lord Castlereagh met with a cordial response to these views in the Emperor Francis and M. de Metternich, who hastened to reply that not less than England, Austria was bound in honour to negotiate with Napoleon, and from a regard to her own character would do so; but that if he still resisted and would not listen to reason, they concurred in opinion that it would be necessary to break at once with him; that the proposal of a regency of the Empress Marie-Louise for behoof of the King of Rome appeared an illusion, and not a serious project; that the idea of giving the throne to Bernadotte was only a passing dream of Alexander, and if carried into execution would be a reproach to all the world; and that if Napoleon was overturned, there would nothing remain but the Bourbons. Thus, a complete accord was established between Great Britain and Austria, by the wisdom and prudence of Lord Castlereagh, on the most momentous and dangerous topic under consideration, and all the obstacles to the negotiation, and which threatened disunion among the Allied Powers, removed.[1] In effect, Metternich at this period

[1] Lord Castlereagh to Sir Charles Stewart, Feb. 4, 1814, MS., and Thiers, xvii. 238-241.

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had come to be more afraid of Russia than France, and he was too happy to draw closer the bonds of amity with Great Britain on that account.

57. Lord Castlereagh's projects for the separate interests of Great Britain, and their admission by the Allies.

During these momentous discussions Lord Castlereagh was not unmindful of the separate interests of Great Britain, and the means of giving her future security, so violently threatened by the results of the revolutionary war. For this purpose he broached, in confidential conversation with the Emperor Alexander and M. de Metternich, three projects which tended to the great object of his solicitude, and had instigated him to undertake the Walcheren expedition. The first of these was the creation of a new kingdom in the Low Countries, to embrace the *whole united seventeen provinces*, which had been severed by the Reformation, and thereby Flanders rendered the battle-field of Europe, and to bestow it on the House of Orange, in return for which Holland was to cede the Cape of Good Hope to Great Britain. The second was a marriage between the Prince of Orange and the Princess Charlotte, heiress of the Crown of England. By this means he hoped that Antwerp and the Scheldt, so essential to the security and independence of Great Britain, would be not only severed from France, but placed under the safeguard of a powerful state of the second order, containing six millions of inhabitants necessarily dependent on England, and now united with it by the closest ties. As this implied a great sacrifice on the part of Austria, to whom the Flemish provinces formerly belonged, he expressed his willingness to concur in the permanent annexation of Venice to that power, ceded to it by Napoleon in 1797 by the treaty of Campo-Formio. The third point upon which he insisted, was silence on the maritime law, and Napoleon's favourite doctrine that the flag should cover the merchandise; a principle which Lord Castlereagh regarded as depriving Great Britain of the chief advantages of her acknowledged maritime superiority. As this last proposal was in direct opposi-

tion to the principles of the armed neutrality for which Russia and Prussia had contended in 1780 and 1800; it might have been expected that it would meet with a serious opposition from these powers; but such was the ascendancy which Lord Castlereagh had acquired in the Allied Councils, and such the sense entertained of the incalculable services which Great Britain had rendered to the common cause during the war, that the whole proposals were acceded to by the whole Allied Powers, and became the groundwork on which the treaties of Vienna, in the next year, were mainly rested.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 236, 237; Lord Castlereagh to E. Thornton, Esq., Feb. 8, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 245.

58. Metternich's secret effort to get Napoleon to negotiate on fair terms.

Passionately desirous of inducing the French Emperor, if possible, to consent to a negotiation on reasonable terms, M. de Metternich, before the plenipotentiaries met at Chatillon, sent forward M. de Floret under pretence of procuring lodgings for them in that town, but in reality to explain to M. de Caulaincourt the terrible dangers which Napoleon ran if he let slip this the last opportunity he would ever have of negotiating on fair terms. He enjoined M. de Floret to say, "that if he had not as yet spoken on the subject of an armistice, in answer to the demand for it by the French Emperor, it was because he was sure that no such demand would be listened to by the Allied Powers; that he had kept the secret, therefore, and would keep it for those by whom it had been intrusted to him; that the wish of the Allies was for peace, but that immediately, and on the conditions which would be offered; that he had no reason to distrust the English, for they were the most moderate of all; and that it would be well worth his while to show confidence in them, and especially in Lord Aberdeen, who was strongly inclined to pacific measures; that the present occasion for negotiating should not be allowed to escape, for if once lost it would never be regained; that if the terms proposed were rejected, the Allies would abandon themselves to ideas of conquest, to which Austria, even while regretting them, could make no resistance; that

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the Emperor Francis in such an event would be in despair for his daughter, but he would not on that account be less faithful to his Allies with whose wishes the great interests of the Austrian empire were wound up, and to whom the Emperor was under great obligations; that he implored his son-in-law to reflect on these things, and resign himself to the sacrifices demanded by circumstances; that in doing so he would be only following the example set to him by the Emperor of Austria, who had been obliged repeatedly to make great sacrifices of late years, but he had done so, and in consequence had now regained the position he had lost; that the Emperor of France might learn from this example that it behoved him to yield to necessity, and so avoid great and irreparable misfortunes." No formal propositions were intrusted to M. de Floret, but the terms of this communication sufficiently proved that the terms of Frankfort were no longer to be adhered to. The Emperor of France paid no regard to this advice, even although the Austrians pressed the Allied Council to halt at Langres to give time for the negotiation to be seriously entered upon. The doubtful issue of the battle of Brienne and the victory of La Rothière, however, put an end to any such projects for an armistice, by proving the determination of Napoleon to put all again upon the hazard of the sword.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 243-247.

59. Instructions to the British plenipotentiaries, and preliminary conferences.

The plenipotentiaries arrived at Chatillon, as agreed on, upon the 3d and 4th February. The instructions to the British commissioners, precisely in terms of what has been already mentioned, had been agreed on between the Allied Powers on the advice of Lord Castlereagh, and the terms agreed on were insisted on by all the commissioners in common.* They were perfectly simple, so far as France was concerned: the empire was to be reduced to the limits of 1790, without either influence or

* The instructions of Lord Castlereagh to Lord Aberdeen, Lord Cathcart, and Sir Charles Stewart, were substantially the same as are contained in his letter to Mr Thornton of February 8, 1814, already given, *ante*, chap. xii. § 55, note.

dominion beyond it. The real difficulty remained behind: what was to be done with the ample spoil which in that event would remain to the Allied Powers, and how were their rival claims and pretensions regarding it to be adjusted? Before the formal sittings commenced, which was on the 7th February, several meetings of a social character took place between the commissioners, in the course of which, amidst the most studied respect shown by them all to M. de Caulaincourt, whose noble and intrepid character had inspired them with unfeigned respect, opportunities were found for confidential conversation, especially between him and Lord Castlereagh. The English plenipotentiary on this occasion took the utmost pains to convince M. de Caulaincourt of the sincerity of his desire to come to an amicable arrangement; and, such was the influence of his calm deportment and simplicity of character, with perfect success. "The most reasonable of all," says M. Thiers, "were the English commissioners, above all Lord Aberdeen—a rare model of simplicity, with a mild gravity, the true representative of a free state. Lord Castlereagh, who took no ostensible part in the negotiations, but directed them all as a master, astonished M. de Caulaincourt by his pacific assurances and protestations of sincerity. He insisted so strongly and so often on the resolution taken to treat with Napoleon, that he succeeded at length in persuading M. de Caulaincourt that he was really sincere, and that Great Britain was waging a war for self-preservation and security, not in the interest of the fallen dynasty. Lord Castlereagh repeated incessantly that if they could agree on the basis of the treaty, peace might be concluded in half an hour. But he did not specify what this basis was to be, and his silence in this important particular was justly regarded by Caulaincourt as of sinister omen for the ultimate fate of the negotiation."[1]

Feb. 7.

[1] Bign. xiii. 308; Fain, 327; Thiers, xvii. 238, 239; Koch, ii. 234.

Metternich, who soon became strongly impressed with the talents and moderation of Lord Castlereagh, wrote at

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the commencement of the Congress to M. de Caulaincourt, "You have conceived erroneous ideas concerning Lord Castlereagh — *he is a man of a cool and just mind, without passions, who will never permit himself to be governed by coteries.* It would be unfortunate, if in the outset of the Congress prejudices should be entertained against the individuals engaged in it. If the Emperor really wishes peace, he will obtain it without difficulty."[1] Next day, being strongly impressed with the dangers of his situation, he wrote earnestly entreating for fuller powers. "The fate of France," said he, "may depend on a peace or an armistice which must be concluded in four days. In such circumstances, I demand precise instructions, which may leave me at liberty to act." When this letter was received, the battle of la Rothière had been fought, the army was in full retreat, and Maret, with great earnestness, besought the Emperor to yield to necessity, and grant the full powers required. Napoleon, for all reply opened Montesquieu's work on *La Grandeur et Decadence du Romains*, which lay in his cabinet, and read aloud the following passage: "I know nothing more magnanimous than the resolution which a monarch took, who reigned in our time, to bury himself under the ruins of his house rather than accept conditions unworthy of a king. He had a mind too lofty to descend lower than fortune had sunk him. He knew well that courage may strengthen a crown, infamy never." "But," said Maret, "could ought be more magnanimous than to sacrifice glory itself to the safety of the State which would fall with you?" "Well, be it so," said the Emperor after a pause; "let Caulaincourt sign whatever is necessary to save Paris and procure peace. I must bear the shame of it, but I will not dictate my own disgrace." In two hours after the full powers were despatched.[2] *

60. Napoleon at length gives full powers to Caulaincourt. Feb. 5.

[1] Metternich to Caulaincourt, Jan. 30, 1814; Fain, 279.

[2] Fain, 287; Cap. x. 375; Hard. xii. 333, 334.

* "I am authorised, Duke, to make known to you that the intention of the Emperor is that you should consider yourself as invested with all the powers necessary in these important circumstances to take the part which you shall

At length the decisive time arrived. On the 5th February the commissioners severally exchanged powers; and it was announced that the four Allied sovereigns would treat together and in union as to the interests and demands of the continental States, great and small; but that Great Britain would not enter into any discussion of her maritime rights, not even with the Powers with whom she was now in alliance, as they depended on natural right, not casual political combinations. M. de Caulaincourt endeavoured to combat this resolution, but in vain, and he was obliged to give way. It was agreed that the negotiation should take place by means of written notes mutually interchanged, and that if they led to any verbal discussion, it should immediately be reduced or rather abridged into a written protocol. The duty of preparing this abstract of the discussions was devolved on Sir Charles Stewart, and the protocols which he drew up exist entire in the archives of the Londonderry family, and where they throw light on the negotiations copious extracts from them will be given in this biography. They agree entirely with what M. Thiers has given as the result of his examination of the French records of the proceedings, a very satisfactory circumstance, as it leaves no doubt as to the accuracy and fidelity of the narrative. It was not till the meeting on the 7th, that the note containing the proposed basis of the Allied Powers was read out by one of the commissioners, which was done in a sonorous and impressive manner, and was as follows:— [1]

61. Agreement as to the form of the negotiations.

Feb. 7.

[1] Projet des Alliés, Feb. 7; Koch, ii. 343; Fain, 327; Thiers, xvii. 289, 290.

France was to return to the limits of 1790, and neither to claim any territorial possession nor put forward any pretensions to influence or dominion beyond

deem advisable to arrest the progress of the enemy. I have sent you a letter with the needful powers which you have solicited. At the moment when his Majesty is about to quit this city (Troyes), he has enjoined me to despatch to you a second, and to make you aware, in express terms, that his Majesty gives you a *carte blanche* to conduct the negotiations to a happy issue—to save the capital on which depend the last hopes of the nation, and avoid a battle."—MARET *to* CAULAINCOURT, *Troyes, Feb.* 1814; FAIN, 286, 287.

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62. Project of the Allies for a basis of pacification. Feb. 7.

those limits. In this way not only were Holland, Flanders, Westphalia, Hamburg, and Italy swept away from the great nation, but the institution and title of Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine and mediator of Switzerland were to be abolished. The old dynasties were to be confirmed in the thrones of Spain and Portugal, to which they had already been restored. In return for so many exactions, England offered to restore to France nearly all the colonial conquests she had made during the war. It is not surprising that such terms, proposing as they did at one fell swoop to sweep away the whole conquests of the Revolution, should have appeared excessively hard and exorbitant to the French plenipotentiary, accustomed as he had been from the commencement of his public life to the contemplation of the grandeur, progression, rise, and ultimate irresistible strength of the empire. His surprise and emotion accordingly were such that, as he himself tells us, it took away his breath. For a time he made no answer, and profound silence reigned in the august meeting. At length, being pressed to make some reply, he requested till evening to collect his thoughts; and this delay having been willingly accorded, he came prepared to state his objections at the afternoon meeting.[1] *

[1] Protocol, Feb. 7, 1814, MS.; Cast. Cor.; Thiers, xvii. 291, 292.

* The following is the protocol of this momentous meeting from the MS. made out at the time by Sir Charles Stewart:—

"*Count Stadion.*—In order to proceed with our business and continue our work, I will state, with all the simplicity possible, the propositions of the Allies.

"*Caulaincourt.*—That is exactly what I desire.

"Count Stadion reads the declaration:—'Les Puissances Alliées, réunissant le point de vue de la sûreté et de l'indépendance future de l'Europe avec leur désir de voir la France dans un état de possession analogue au rang qu'elle a toujours occupé dans le système politique, et considérant la situation dans laquelle l'Europe se trouve placée à l'égard de la France à la suite des succès obtenus par leurs armes, les plénipotentiaires des Cours Alliés ont ordre de demander—

"'*Que la France entre dans les limites qu'elle avait avant la Révolution*, sauf des arrangemens d'une convenance réciproque sur des portions de territoire au-delà des limites de part et d'autre, et sauf des restitutions que l'Angleterre est prête à faire pour l'intérêt général de l'Europe contre les rétrocessions ci-dessus demandées à la France, lesquelles restitutions seront prises sur les conquêtes

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63. M. de Caulaincourt's reply to the Allies.

In the first instance, he called the attention of the conference to the wide difference of the basis now put forward and that taken in the Frankfort propositions—a matter concerning which there could be no dispute, as, in addition to what M. de Saint Aignan stated had passed between him and M. de Metternich, which had never been contradicted, there existed the latter's written note, which contained a *résumé* of them on his demand from

que l'Angleterre a faites pendant la guerre. Qu'en conséquence la France abandonne toute influence directe hors de ses limites futures, et que le chef de son gouvernement renonce à tous les titres qui ressortent de ses rapports de souveraineté ou de protecorât sur l'Italie, l'Allemagne, et la Suisse.'

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—With regard to France renouncing the titles of the chief of her Government: she has already done so by the facts that have occurred. You have in your propositions generalised the question. France has stated in the most explicit manner she is ready to make the greatest sacrifices; I only desire to know what sacrifices you ask, and to know where I am.

"*Count Stadion.*—The first thing we desire is that France should enter into her ancient limits.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—Is not the evident interpretation of 'limits' her ancient possessions? What are the compensations France is to receive? Establish the mass of compensations and the mass of sacrifices. I only ask you to place on one side of the paper what you ask, and on the other the sacrifices, and I will answer immediately. You have stated you are inclined to establish France in a *rapport* with the other Powers of Europe. France entering into her ancient limits without compensation would not be according to this declaration. Why return on our misfortunes? Specify. If we fall into discussion, I could enter into the Frankfort basis. You have made declarations; a correspondence in writing exists. It is quite evident you have changed your intentions: I only desire to know in twenty-four hours what you wish—establish your decisions.

"*Count Stadion.*—The proposition is established on our part as far as possible at present.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—We are falling into discussion, and this is what I wish to avoid.

"*M. de Humboldt.*—France, entering into her ancient limits, desires such and such restitutions. It is for France to point these out.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—You are all allies to England; you form but one whole. It is for England to declare what she will restore on France entering into her ancient limits. If you don't establish things in this way, I should return to the Frankfort basis.

"*Count Stadion.*—The mass of sacrifices are in the first instance that France should return into her ancient limits.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—It is not that those who are to make the sacrifices are to designate them.

"*M. de Razumowski.*—Let us resume, and return to the general principle. Europe desires France to enter into her ancient limits; France's present position in Europe does not justify her in mixing in the affairs of Europe.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—I can only understand limits as possessions: if you propose to France to enter into her limits, afford her facilities for this general

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the Duke of Bassano for an explicit declaration of the French Emperor's intentions regarding them. That answer had been given; the basis had been formally accepted; and on what principle do the Allied Powers now come forward with proposals so essentially different? Again, to regard the matter with reference to the balance of power in Europe, with what reason can it now be insisted, after having solemnly declared on entering upon

arrangement. I am ready to hear and listen to any propositions for France. It is proposed, on the part of Europe, for France to enter into her limits. Put the question on her ancient state of possessions, and then say what possession affects England or any other Power. If there are objects of difficulty, France will remove all.

"*M. de Razumowski.*—We speak of the limits of France in Europe.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—The *rôle* I play here is not one of an agreeable nature; it is a *rôle de sacrifices*. Permit me to read the papers. (Reads.) What results from this? A new order of things in Europe. Why not establish immediately what that order is to be? What is it that you wish? Your *projet* is with application; it binds by a general demand to all, and it applies to all.

"*Count Stadion.*—The first demand is positive.

"*Sir Charles Stewart.*—Are you ready to declare for France, *in limine*, that she is willing to enter into her ancient limits in Europe?

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—It is impossible to make two questions of this; it can be but one.

"*M. de Humboldt.*—France says, perhaps, I will enter into my ancient limits if England will restore so and so, and France should specify.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—Tell me what you demand—you have but to prescribe—I will finish immediately. You tell me to enter into my ancient limits. You will not tell me what you will give me for this. Tell me only, if France will enter into her ancient limits, are you authorised to make the offer of the restitutions?

"*Sir Charles Stewart.*—It is for France to answer the first demand and to *préciser*.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—To know the sacrifices you ask, and the use you would put them to, is necessary. This cannot be taken divided.

"*Sir Charles Stewart.*—England's sacrifices will be for the state of Europe, not to France. I don't understand why we should have the charge of stating them.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—Much will depend, if we accept our ancient limits, on the use you will make of such and such possessions. This can be a proceeding but on a statement of circumstances. For example, suppose you demand Belgium, the departments of the Rhine, &c.—in order to say whether we will give this, we should know the use you will make of them.

"*M. de Razumowski.*—This of course must be taken *ad referendum*.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—I beg you will explain what you will do with the concessions and sacrifices you desire, and the use you will make of them, and, if they are agreed to by me, is it peace?

"*Lord Aberdeen.*—We cannot answer this question at present.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—If I accept these propositions, do I finish the war?

her territory, that the Allies had no intention of curtailing her of her just greatness, that France is to return to the limits of 1790? Recollect that since 1790 three Powers on the Continent have considerably augmented their influence and strength by the partition of Poland, and others have made acquisitions which have entirely altered the balance of power in the lesser states. If the peace of Europe requires that everything should return to the



Little arrangements can be finished afterwards; preliminaries can always be signed in twenty-four hours.

"*Count Stadion.*—I think our first question is clear.

"*M. de Caulaincourt* now read a note of the manner in which he endeavoured to explain himself to-day, and observed: I have already said France would make great sacrifices to arrive at peace. I wish to know—1st, Those sacrifices; 2dly, The use they would be put to; 3dly, To accept them, and stop the war.

"*M. de Humboldt* answered these three points in detail, and with ability.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—If I yield to your proposal, will it bring us to a conclusion and stop the war?

"*Count Stadion.*—We come certainly to make peace.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—If I adopt your propositions, will it bring you immediately to peace, and make you state the compensations you will give?

"*Lord Aberdeen.*—We will consider of this.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—If you will permit me to adjourn for a few hours to reflect, I shall esteem it as a personal favour.

"This was consented to.

"The plenipotentiaries met again in the evening at eight o'clock; and M. de Caulaincourt produced a note, and read it, which was as follows:—

"'*Séance du 7 Fevrier*, 1814.

"'Le plénipotentiaire de France renouvelle encore l'engagement déjà pris par sa Cour de faire pour la paix les plus grands sacrifices: quelqu'éloignée que la démande faite dans la séance d'aujourd'hui au nom des Puissances Alliées soit des bases proposées par elles à Frankfort, et fondées sur ce que les Alliés eux-mêmes ont appellé les limites naturelles de la France, quelqu'éloignée qu'elle soit des déclarations que toutes les Cours n'ont cessé de faire à la face de l'Europe, quelqu'éloignées que soient même leurs propositions d'un état de possession analogue au rang que la France a toujours occupé dans le système politique, bases que les plénipotentiaires des Puissances Alliées rappellent encore dans leur proposition de ce jour; enfin, quoique le resultat de cette proposition soit d'appliquer à la France seule un principe que les Puissances Alliées ne parlent point d'adopter pour elles-mêmes, et dont cependant l'application ne peut être juste, si elle n'est point réciproque et impartiale, le plénipotentiaire Français n'hésiterait pas à s'expliquer sans retard de la manière la plus positive sur cette demande, si chaque sacrifice qui peut être fait, et le degré dans lequel il peut l'être, ne dépendaient pas nécessairement de l'espèce et du nombre de ceux qui seront demandés, comme la somme des sacrifices dépend aussi nécessairement de celle des compensations. Toutes les questions d'une telle négociation sont tellement liées et subordonnées les uns aux autres, qu'on ne peut prendre de parti sur aucune avant de les connoître toutes. Il ne peut être indifférent à celui à qui on demande des sacrifices de savoir au

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condition of 1790, should not all the other states at the same time do the same? Should not Austria restore Venice, and both she and Prussia abandon what they have obtained by the annexation of the lesser ecclesiastical states; and both they and Russia give up what they have since acquired by the last partition of Poland? Should not England on the same principle surrender the Ionian Islands, Malta, the Cape of Good Hope, and the Isle of France? To compel France *alone* to return

profit de qui il les fait, et quel emploi on veut en faire; enfin, si en les faisant on peut mettre tout de suite un terme aux malheurs de la guerre. Un projet qui développerait les vues des Alliés dans tout leur ensemble remplirait ce but. Le plénipotentiaire Français renouvelle donc de la manière la plus instante, la demande, que les plénipotentiaires des Cours Alliées veuillent bien s'expliquer positivement sur tous les points précités.'"

"When, on reading this instrument, they came to the words '*les limites naturelles de la France*,' *Count Stadion* interrupted him, and said, 'I cannot let that pass unnoticed; Prince Metternich never admitted that expression to M. de Saint Aignan.'

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—Whatever M. de Saint Aignan had heard from Prince Metternich, Count Nesselrode, and Lord Aberdeen, is on record; M. de Saint Aignan, after the conference, wrote it down. His paper was read and re-read by Prince Metternich, and alterations made in the handwriting of the Prince; I have this document to show. I do not cite it or enter into discussion on it to provoke dispute, but to prove he was justified in using the expression objected to.

"*Lord Aberdeen* said that he had animadverted strongly on these expressions with Prince Metternich; that as to what passed with M. de Saint Aignan he objected in the strongest manner to that part of his minute relative to the maritime question; that, however, he thought it a wholly unimportant document, and forbore to alter any part of it, lest such alteration should show that he approved of it; that he would now give in at the next *séance* a detail of what passed, with his notes, for the French plenipotentiary's information.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—I did not bring this forward to embarrass, nor is it my object. I did not cite the basis then, and observe on the different one now proposed, to create discussion; I wished only to establish our text.

"*Count Razumowski.*—I have no knowledge of the document alluded to; there is nothing about it in my instructions.

"*M. de Caulaincourt* proceeded to read his paper, which, on some discussion, was agreed to be styled neither a declaration nor a note, but a 'proposition.'

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—As the Allied paper is to stand on the protocol, I think mine should do so likewise. This was agreed to.

"*Count Stadion.*—The Allied plenipotentiaries will take the French plenipotentiary's paper *ad referendum*.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—I am much surprised we are not now to proceed. When shall we have another conference?

"*Count Stadion.*—We cannot name the time, but we will acquaint you when we know and are ready."

—*Protocol, Séance, 7 Fevrier*, 1814; *MS. Castlereagh Papers.*

within her ancient limits is not to *restore* the balance of power, but to *destroy* it, to serve the purpose of the states which are now coalesced against that power. The real strength of France is to be found in the courage, energy, and military spirit of her people; and to deprive her of a large portion of the territory she has acquired, is unnecessarily to insult, but not really to weaken her. Doubtless anything might be demanded in the name of victory, and that argument cuts short all discussion; but in that case you must cast to the winds the insidious words made use of in crossing the Rhine, and openly admit that the conduct of the Allied Powers was to be regulated by force, not reason. France would then know what she had to expect from her invaders, and act accordingly. Nor is this all. Why demand in a mass enormous sacrifices from France, without announcing what is proposed to be done with the territory wrested from her, or determining anything as to the Low Countries, the Rhenish provinces, the Swiss and Italian frontiers, when so many important questions remained to be resolved? How is it possible to demand the cession of such extensive territories without at the same time specifying to whom they were to be conveyed? Would not their being added to a great Power instead of a small one make a material difference in the balance of power? To demand their cession without saying to whom they are to accrue, was an unjustifiable proceeding, which would hardly be justified if the invaders had their feet on the neck of France, and if unhappily this might one day be the case, it was not so as yet. Finally, if it is determined by its representative to make a painful sacrifice, it would only be on condition of an immediate cessation of hostilities—in fact, to avoid a battle for life or death, and cover Paris. It is out of the question to propose such sacrifices unless an assurance is given that, once acceded to, the enemy would immediately suspend their advance.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 292, 293; Prot. Feb. 7, 1814, MS. Cast. Cor.

It could not be denied that there was much force in

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64. Answer of the Allied representatives.

these able observations, which made a skilful use of the imprudent declaration of the Allies at Frankfort, relative to the wish of the Allies to leave France great and powerful, and to restore matters to such a state as might be safe and honourable to all parties. They all felt, though none cared to mention it, that the conquest of one-third of France since those propositions were made, and the advance of the Allied standards into the heart of its territory, justified the Allies in now demanding more rigorous terms than when that barrier stream had not been crossed, nor the real weakness of the empire revealed. It was difficult, however, to state such a consideration without weakening the moral effect arising from the moderation of the Frankfort proposals, and possibly awakening a national resistance in France, which it had gone far to allay. The Allied representatives accordingly answered, through Count Stadion on the part of Austria, and Lord Aberdeen on that of England, that this reference to the Frankfort proposals was beside the question; that they were not to discuss the proposals made then, but those made now at Chatillon; that it was on them, and not the preceding ones, that they were to decide; that they had no power to discuss the proposals now made, but simply were authorised to propose them, and require a categorical answer, yes or no; and if the answer was in the negative, they must prepare for an immediate rupture of the conferences, and a war of life or death. M. de Caulaincourt, finding the Allied commissioners thus resolute, and that he was required to give either a formal acceptance of the terms proposed, or to announce their unconditional refusal, declared he had not sufficient power to do either the one or the other, and that he must be allowed time to confer with the Emperor, which was granted.[1]

[1] Koch, ii. 236, 343; Thiers, xvii. 296, 297; Chatillon Protocol, March 7, 1814, MS.

In truth, Caulaincourt, as already shown, did hold full power from Napoleon to accede to the terms proposed by the Allies if there was no other mode of avoiding a

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general battle or saving Paris, but he did not venture as yet to exercise it; and he thought with reason that the military operations which he knew the Emperor had in contemplation might so far improve his situation as to enable him to hold out for less rigorous terms. He was not on that account, however, the less anxious or the less impressed with the gravity of the situation in which France was now placed, or the imminent danger which impended over her, if the terms proposed by the Allies were not immediately acceeded to. Impressed with these ideas, he wrote the same evening to Napoleon for specific instructions as to exercising the *carte blanche* for signing which he held; and he asked Lord Aberdeen apart whether a suspension of hostilities could be procured on no other terms but on unconditional acceptance of the proposals, to which that nobleman at once replied that on no other condition could his demand be acceded to. His anxiety was redoubled next day, by learning that the sittings of the congress were in the mean time suspended, without being broken up, to give the Emperor of Russia an opportunity of communicating with the other Allied sovereigns on the present posture of affairs. In his despair he wrote to M. de Metternich to inquire from him also whether a suspension of arms could be obtained on no other terms than the grievous one of France returning to her ancient limits. Before receiving an answer, he again wrote to Napoleon representing the gravity of affairs, and requiring specific instructions; but he could extract nothing from the Emperor, but that events of importance were in preparation, to gain time, and, above all, precipitate nothing. Metternich answered immediately in a more candid spirit. "It is impossible to be more united than we are in thoughts, views, and principles.[1] If the Emperor Napoleon in the present grave circumstances listens only to the voice of reason—if he seeks his glory in the happiness of his people, renouncing his former ideas of political supremacy—the

65. Caulaincourt endeavours to gain time and to obtain a suspension of hostilities.

Feb. 9.

[1] Metternich to Caulaincourt, Feb. 12, 1814; Fain, 305, 306, 327; Koch, ii. 343; Thiers, xvii. 298, 299.

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Emperor Francis will look back with satisfaction to the moment when he confided to him the daughter of his heart. If a fatal blindness renders your master deaf to the unanimous voice of his people and to the peace of Europe, the Emperor of Austria will deplore the fate of his daughter, but not swerve from his path."

66. Separation of the Allied armies, of which Napoleon resolves to take advantage.

In truth, the French Emperor had in his *pensée intime* no intention of acceding to the demands of the Allies, but was desirous only to gain time to commence the important military operations which he had in contemplation, and on the issue of which he had staked his kingdom and his life. The Allies, misled by a false confidence, and underrating the resources which were still at his disposal, had adopted a resolution, after the victory of La Rothière, which at length presented him the opportunity for which he had so long been looking, of interposing between their armies, and from a central point striking first at one and then at the other. Pressed by the difficulty of getting supplies for such an enormous multitude of carriages and horses, or even moving them along a single road, where 170,000 men were accumulated together or in close communication, the Allied generals resolved, in a council of war held on the 4th February at Brienne, *to separate their armies*, and advance by different though converging lines upon Paris. Schwartzenberg was to advance on the great road from Troyes, down the valley of the Seine; while Blucher, with the Army of Silesia, moved by Lesmont upon Vitry, forming a junction with the corps of D'York, which had now reached St Dizier, and that of Kleist, which was approaching from the Rhine, and was then to march by the valley of the Marne on the French capital. The two armies, it was true, would be separated by these movements, and a considerable space, especially at first, lie between them. But this was no more than had been the case in the campaign of Dresden, which, nevertheless, had led at Leipsic to the happiest results, and by repeating

the same system now, and moving mutually to each other's support when threatened by the enemy, it was confidently expected that similar advantages might be gained. Probably they were right in the abstract in these views, and in the circumstances the separation of the armies was unavoidable. But in carrying them into execution, grievous faults were committed, of which Napoleon speedily took advantage, and which brought the fortunes of the Coalition to the very brink of ruin.[1]

[1] Lond. 269, 270; Burgh. 120-124; Dan. 74, 75.

67. Serious error of Blucher at this period.

Marshal Blucher was a very great general, and he has rendered such services to the cause of European independence that it is painful to be obliged to say anything which may serve to derogate from his reputation; but the event proved that he erred, and erred grievously, by his conduct on this occasion. Already, on 30th January, the very day of the battle of Brienne, the vigilant military eye of Lord Castlereagh had discovered that he was extending his columns too much*—an error which brought him into danger, averted only by heroic courage in that hard-fought action against very superior numbers. The danger thus run, and only averted by the concentration of *both* the Allied armies on the field of La Rothière, had no effect in impressing the necessity of a more cautious conduct on the Prussian hero. The following judicious criticism on his conduct was written at the time by Sir Charles Stewart: "A too confident sentiment has of late prevailed, and because Napoleon has been defeated in an open battle, it is supposed he can no longer maintain an effective resistance. Little calculation is placed on the considerable

* "Blucher, by a dash in advance of our own line, has opened Nancy too much. A letter from Berthier, dated 27th January from Vitry, has been intercepted, which says, Buonaparte is advancing with 'une belle et bonne armée sur les derrières de l'ennemi.' Blucher is a true hero, but he may sometimes err. A retreat now would be very inconvenient. I am confident our advantages are solid with management; but we must not undervalue our difficulties, with a line of waggons rolling day and night in our rear, from Berlin, Bohemia, and Hungary, which a small corps of cavalry thrown round our flanks might at once arrest, if strength is thrown too rapidly in advance."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *Langres, January* 30, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 213.

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reinforcements that the French empire continues to pour out on all sides, and each of the Allied armies thinks itself capable of meeting the enemy unaided by the other; whereas nothing but their union, and a joint operation of the whole collected force, can ever insure success. Both the Grand Army and the Army of Silesia are eager to have the eclat of first entering Paris. To this absurd desire many of the misfortunes of Marshal Blucher, in his march forward, are to be attributed. It has led him to advance far too rashly, and separate himself too widely from the support of Prince Schwartzenberg; and when he experienced a check, it became the more serious from the Silesian Army having no succours or reserves to fall back upon. Prince Schwartzenberg's marches were more measured; but there was a want of concert, which nothing but an undue sanguine expectation as to the ultimate result can account for."[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Liverpool, Feb. 27, 1814, MS., and Lond. 270, 271.

68. Napoleon's project of attacking Blucher in detail.

Master of a central position between the two armies of the Allies, and possessed of an interior line of communication, Napoleon was not the man to let the opportunity slip of striking the important blow for which he had long and anxiously been looking. He was the more inclined to hazard the attempt, that the two Allied armies were now separated by a considerable distance from each other; their generals were known to be on far from cordial terms; and the disposition of the Prussian commander, ardent, bold, and often rash, was too much in contrast with the slow and methodical temperament of the Austrian generalissimo, to anticipate any very rapid or cordial co-operation between them. Within a week of the battle of La Rothière, the much-wished-for opportunity presented itself. York, after driving Macdonald from Chalons, was following him down the Marne to Chateau-Thierry; while Blucher, moving rapidly on a line equidistant from the Marne and the Aube towards Paris, had sent Sacken forward by Montmirail, followed by Olsoofief, while he himself was to bring

up Kleist's corps as soon as it arrived from the rear. On the 9th February, D'York, with 18,000 Prussians, was at Chateau-Thierry on the Marne; Sacken with 20,000 Russians on the road to Montmirail; while Olsoofief, with 6000, was at Champaubert; and Blucher himself was at Vertus, awaiting the hourly expected arrival of Kleist, with 10,000 Prussians, and Kaptsevitch, with 8000 Russians of Langeron's corps from the Rhine. Thus, 60,000 men, of the very best quality indeed, but fearfully scattered, were spread over a space forty miles broad, from Chalons to La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. And by a singular piece of good fortune for the French Emperor, the post of Champaubert, which commanded the road from Nogent, where Napoleon now lay, to Montmirail, in the very centre of the enemy's scattered position, was only occupied by Olsoofief, with 6000 men. Instantly seeing his advantage, Napoleon was not slow in making the most of it. On February 7th, he moved forward Marmont with his cavalry and part of his infantry to Sezanne from Nogent, and on the two following days he followed in person with the Young, and a part of the Old Guard, under Ney and Mortier, in all, 30,000 men; a small force, but which wellnigh changed the fate of the world.[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvii. 300, 301; Koch, i. 208; Fain, ii. 92; Plotho, iii. 179.

* Napoleon's designs at this period are fully detailed in a very interesting letter which he wrote to Joseph at Paris, on 9th February: "I start to-morrow for Sezanne, and I hope then to attack the Army of Silesia. Sacken is in Montmirail with 15,000 men. I shall debouch upon him by Sezanne and Champaubert. If this operation prove entirely successful, it will decide the campaign. If I am successful in two or three days in crushing the Army of Silesia (Blucher), I shall then return upon Montereau. With your reserves, I shall have 80,000 men, and with them I may give affairs an unexpected turn. On the right the Duke of Reggio (Oudinot) has 25,000 men; in the centre the Duke of Belluno (Victor) has 14,000; I myself, with the left, have 30,000, making in all 60,000 or 70,000 men, including the engineers and artillery. I calculate, in the first instance, on having to deal with 45,000 of the Army of Silesia, and 15,000 of Schwartzenberg's, including Bubna and the Cossacks. So that, if I beat the Army of Silesia, and put it for some days *hors de combat*, I shall be able to turn upon Schwartzenberg with 60,000 or 70,000 men, including the reinforcements you will send me from Paris; and I do not think he will be able to oppose to me more than 110,000 or 120,000 men. If I do not find myself strong enough to attack him, I shall at least be able to keep him in check for fifteen or twenty days; and this will give time for new combinations. As to-morrow I shall attack the enemy in rear, you need be under

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69. March on, and victory of, Champaubert. Feb. 10.

The difficulties of the cross-march from Nogent to Champaubert, through execrable unpaved roads, rendered almost impassable by a rapid thaw, were such that it was next to impossible to get the guns through. They stuck fast in the mud near Chapton; and Marmont, who led the advance, reported to the Emperor that the roads were impassable, and the enterprise must be abandoned. The army, at the same time, crushed by suffering, fell into the most frightful disorder, against which Napoleon issued a severe and menacing proclamation.* All authority seemed at an end; murmurs were universal in the ranks; the soldiers openly said the Emperor had gone mad. Still, however, he held on; large bodies of peasants were harnessed to the guns, and, after great efforts, got them through. Such constancy was not long of meeting with its reward. The heads of Marmont's columns came in sight, on entering the defile of St Gond, of Olsoofief's men, posted on the summit of the plateau of Baye, at its extremity; but the latter were so little prepared, that they were cooking their dinner. The Russian generals could not be persuaded anything serious was at hand; they said it was merely a small marauding column, and sent forward some Cossacks to drive them back. They soon discovered their mistake. Baye was speedily carried, the summit of the plateau won, and Champaubert itself attacked. Marmont's cavalry, supported by two squadrons of the Guard, advanced at a rapid pace on the right, while his infantry moved forward direct against the village. The sight of the uniforms of the Guard revealed the danger; the Russians knew at once the Emperor was

no alarm should he push forward to La Ferté or Meaux."—NAPOLEON *to* JOSEPH, *Nogent, 9th February* 1814; BIGNON, xiii. 288, 289.

* "The Emperor has to express to the army his displeasure at the excesses to which it abandons itself. Such disorders are always hurtful; but they become criminal when committed in our native country. From this day forth, the chiefs of corps and generals shall be held responsible for the conduct of their troops. The inhabitants are flying on every side, and the troops, instead of being their country's defenders, have become its scourge."—*Proclamation, 9th February* 1814; DANILEFSKY, 95.

upon them. Olsoofief was soon forced into a retreat, which, as the road to Vertus was occupied by the French horse, he could only direct across country towards Montmirail, where Sacken lay. Enveloped by superior forces, however, it soon turned into flight, in the course of which Olsoofief himself, and all his staff, 24 guns, and 3000 prisoners, were taken, and his whole division, with the exception of a small body under General Udom, who escaped to Pont-à-Binson, was destroyed.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 208; Dan. 95, 96; Fain, ii. 92, 93; Marm. vi. 378; Thiers, xvii. 306, 307.

70. Napoleon's joy and sanguine expectations at this victory.

Napoleon was highly elated, as well he might be, with this glorious success, which first broke through the long and dismal catalogue of disasters which had afflicted his empire ever since the battle of Dresden in the preceding year. Sitting at supper at Champaubert, on the evening of his victory, with his marshals, in a little inn, he indulged without reserve in the brilliant prospects which this first success opened to him. "If," said he, "to-morrow I am as fortunate as I have been to-day, in fifteen days I shall have driven the enemy beyond the Rhine, and from the Rhine to the Vistula is but a step." He was as good as his word, at least in the first instance; and by vigorously following up this first success, he brought the enemy into such straits, and inspired them with such apprehension, that nothing but the indomitable firmness of Lord Castlereagh at the decisive moment, prevented their fortunes being entirely wrecked, and the visions of the Emperor realised to the letter.[2]

[2] Thiers, xvii. 306, 307; Marm. vi. 52.

71. Victory of Montmirail. Feb. 11.

Setting out at daybreak on the following morning, Napoleon directed his steps towards Montmirail, beyond which Sacken lay with 16,000 men, a force wholly inadequate to resist that with which he was now threatened. For the French Emperor, having been joined by Leval's division from Spain, was able, after leaving Marmont with half his corps at Etoges to watch Blucher, to set out along the great road with 28,000 men. On debouching from Montmirail, he came in sight of the Russian general, who was returning, in the full confidence of victory, to the

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encounter. The action soon became extremely warm, especially at the village of Marchais, where the Russian right projected forward towards Montmirail, which was taken and retaken several times, and finally remained in the hands of the French. No decisive advantage was gained, however, on either side, till two o'clock in the afternoon, when, the Old Guard having come up, Napoleon prepared to strike the decisive blow. With this view, he ordered Ricard, who had won and still held Marchais, to evacuate that village and retire in apparent disorder on the road towards Montmirail. Sacken fell into the snare. Hastily leaving, with great part of his centre, his position at L'Epine-aux-Bois, he re-occupied Marchais, and pursued the retiring French on the great road. Meanwhile, the Emperor despatched Friant with the Old Guard to L'Epine-aux-Bois, now occupied only by a small detachment, of which the steady veterans made themselves masters by a bayonet charge, without firing a shot. Having thus become master of the enemy's line of retreat,—for as he held Montmirail, they could only escape by filing to their left on Chateau-Thierry, where D'York was,—Napoleon ordered Ricard to halt and face about, and sent two battalions of the Young Guard to aid him in retaking Marchais and driving Sacken back on L'Epine-aux-Bois, strongly occupied by the Old Guard. These movements were entirely successful. After a sharp conflict, Marchais was retaken, and the Russians driven out, who, seeing their retreat by L'Epine-aux-Bois intercepted, drew off through the fields, where they were closely pursued with great slaughter by the cavalry of the Imperial Guard. In a few minutes 3000 prisoners were taken, with 30 guns, besides 2500 slain; and in the course of the retreat, which they made by a long circuit across country to their left towards Fontenelle, where the head of D'York's corps lay, 1000 men were made prisoners, and 3 more guns taken. The whole French loss did not exceed 1000 men.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 309-311; Plotho, iii. 183, 184; Koch, i. 252; Clausewitz, vii. 424.

Napoleon had now completely succeeded in his object. He had broken into the midst of the scattered columns of the Army of Silesia, surprised Blucher *in flagrante delicto*, and already defeated, and partially destroyed, two of them. This great success, however, was but the prelude to still greater triumphs. On the day after the battle of Montmirail, he marched with his whole disposable force in hand towards Chateau-Thierry, where the third corps under D'York, joined to the remains of Sacken, lay; the advanced-posts were speedily driven into that town by the charges of the French Gardes d'Honneur. Finding himself assailed by the Emperor in person, at the head of greatly superior forces, D'York began to withdraw from Chateau-Thierry, but he was not permitted to do so without molestation. The rearguard, consisting of four Russian and three Prussian battalions, was assailed while still outside the town; sword in hand the French cuirassiers fell on, and entered the place along with them, where 500 men were speedily slain, and 2000 prisoners, with 7 guns, taken. The destruction of the whole rearguard would have been complete, if the enemy had not, in the middle of the conflict in the streets, broken down the bridge over the Marne behind the town, which prevented further pursuit. The success was great and important, but not so considerable as it would have been if Macdonald had followed out the Emperor's instructions, which were to have halted at Meaux, and retraced his steps by the right bank of the Marne without delay, in which case he would have come upon D'York's men after they crossed at Chateau-Thierry, and made several thousand prisoners.[1]

72. Battle of Chateau-Thierry. Feb. 12.

[1] Thiers, xvii. 315, 316; Dan. 115.

Three of Blucher's detached corps had now been defeated, and there remained only the fourth, under the field-marshal in person, to be disposed of. Against it, accordingly, Napoleon now bent all the forces he could command, consisting of the corps of Marmont; Leval's division, just arrived from Spain; Musnier and Curial's

73. Battle of Vauchamps. Feb. 14.

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divisions of the Young, and Friant's of the Old Guard; and all the cavalry of the Guard, under Ney. At the same time, Mortier, with the second division of the Guard and a large body of cavalry, was detached towards Soissons, with orders to pursue, without intermission, the remains of the defeated corps of Sacken and D'York, who were retiring in that direction, in order to prevent them from rendering any assistance to Blucher; and Victor was reinforced so as to enable him, in the valley of the Seine, to impede, if he could not prevent, the advance of the Grand Army under Schwartzenberg. Meanwhile Blucher, who had been boiling with indignation at the intelligence successively received of the defeat of his lieutenants, but had hitherto been prevented from moving by the want of force, as the main body of Kleist's and Kaptsevich's corps had not yet come up, at length, on their arrival, deemed himself strong enough to resume the offensive with the column under his immediate command, which now amounted to 20,000 men. Marmont, who, with his weak half corps, had alone been left to watch him at Etoges, fell back before him till he was joined, on the morning of the 14th, by Napoleon, between Montmirail and Vauchamps. The offensive was immediately resumed. The advanced-guard of the French, under Ricard, encountered that of the Allies, consisting of Ziethen's Prussians, in the village of Vauchamps, when a furious combat ensued. The village was taken and retaken several times; and meanwhile Napoleon detached Grouchy with the whole cavalry to gain, by a long circuit through the fields, the rear of the combatants on the road from Vauchamps to Etoges. Blucher, suspecting, from seeing the uniforms of the Guard in the enemy's ranks, that the Emperor was there in person, and seeing he was outnumbered, took the resolution to retreat, and it was conducted at first to Champaubert in good order, and with great resolution. But what was the astonishment of the Russians when, on emerging from that village into the open country, they beheld the dense

squadrons of Grouchy emerge from the woods on the side of the road, and, uniting and forming across it, present a barrier of steel against any further retreat; while the Emperor himself, at the head of the infantry of the Guard, was thundering in close pursuit, and throwing in volleys at every step! Then, indeed, the mighty soul of the German hero sank within him; and, turning to Prince Augustus of Prussia, he said, "Nothing remains but to die here." With mournful resolution he took post in front of the retreating column, awaiting the cannon-shot which it was fondly hoped would prove the last. "If you are killed here," said his aide-de-camp Nostitz, "do you really think history will praise you for it?" Struck with these words, the brave Prussian recovered his presence of mind, and made dispositions to force his way through. The guns not dismounted were all drawn to the front, the men arranged in close column, flanked by the cavalry, and, thus disposed, the weighty mass bore down with unshrinking step on the glittering line before it. The loss was severe; and the long column, like a huge snake mortally wounded, wound its way through the hostile squadrons, bleeding at every pore. But the onset, headed by Blucher and Prince Augustus, proved successful: the passage was forced, and the weary Allies reached Etoges. Hardly had they lain down to rest, however, when Marmont's men, issuing from the darkness, rushed into the town with fixed bayonets. Amidst the confusion of a night-surprise the retreat had to be resumed, and the moving *fight* continued till midnight, when the Prussians reached Bergeres, and at length found a few hours of repose. But they lost in this disastrous day eight thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, with fifteen guns and eight standards. Few prisoners were taken, the action being so desperate that scarce any quarter was either asked or given; and the entire loss of the French did not exceed twelve hundred men.[1]*

[1] Thiers, xvii. 320-325; Marm. v. 239-242; Dan. 119; Koch, i.264; Plotho, iii. 190.

* Such was Napoleon's joy at these glorious successes, that he exclaimed to Maret and Berthier, when he heard of the offer of the Allies to conclude an armis-

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74. Movements of Schwartzenberg towards Paris.

While Napoleon in person was gaining these astonishing successes over the detached columns of Blucher's army, Prince Schwartzenberg, relieved for the time from the pressure of the Emperor, was moving with more rapidity than usual on the two banks of the Seine, by Fontainebleau, Melun, and Provins, on Paris. The chivalrous and ardent soul of Alexander was preoccupied with the idea of entering Paris at the head of his magnificent Guards, and avenging the ashes of his own capital by sparing that of his prostrate enemy. It was, literally speaking, a race between him and Blucher which should first reach the capital—the former by the valley of the Seine, the latter by that of the Marne. Victor and Oudinot, who, with less than 30,000 men, were charged with the defence of the metropolis against Schwartzenberg's army, were wholly unable to oppose any serious obstacle to its advance. The whole course of the Seine from Nogent to Montereau was inundated by troops; Sens and Fontainebleau on the left, Provins and Nangis on the right bank, were occupied in great strength, and every one expected to be in the French capital in a few days. Alexander having shared to the very full these sanguine expectations, and having asked General Reynier—who, having been exchanged, was on his way to the French capital—when he thought he would

tice, in accordance with Caulaincourt's request, and negotiate on the principle of the ancient limits—"What! do you urge me to sign such a treaty, and trample under foot my coronation oath to preserve inviolate the territory of the Republic? Disasters unheard-of might perhaps compel me to relinquish the conquests I myself have made; but to abandon also those made before me—to betray the trust made over to me with such confidence—to leave France, after so much blood has been shed and such victories gained, smaller than ever—never could I do so without treachery, without disgrace! You are fearful of a continuation of the war. I am not insensible to that, but dread, still more, dangers yet more certain, which you do not perceive. If we renounce the frontier of the Rhine, it is not merely France which recedes, but Austria and Prussia which advance. France has need of peace, but such a one as they seek to impose upon it would be more dangerous than the most inveterate war. What would I be to the French if I were to sign their humiliation? What could I answer to the Republicans in the Senate or the Chambers when they came to ask me for the frontier of the Rhine? God preserve me from such affronts! Write to Caulaincourt; but tell him that I reject the treaty. I prefer to run the greatest risks of war."—FAIN, 87-89.

be in Paris, the latter replied, "By the 14th or 15th of February." "Not till then!" replied the Emperor; "Blucher will be there before you. Napoleon has humiliated me, I will humiliate him; and so little do I make war on France, that, if he were killed, I would make peace to-morrow." "It is then for the Bourbons that your Majesty is making war?" replied Reynier. "The Bourbons," resumed Alexander, "*I care not a straw for them;* choose a chief *among the generals* who have contributed so much to the glory of France, and we are willing to accept him." Continuing the subject, Alexander then revealed to him the strange project which he had long entertained, of putting Bernadotte on the throne of France, as his predecessor Catherine had, forty years before, put Poniatowski on that of Poland. There was something both flattering to his vanity, and not a little advantageous in a political point of view to the Czar, in the project of thus putting an old French, but now a foreign, general on the throne of a country from which he had suffered so much, and establishing a lasting influence over the most formidable of the Western Powers. This strange project of Alexander —which, if successful, would have defeated the main object of the war, which was security to Europe from military domination—was not the least of the many difficulties with which Lord Castlereagh and Sir Charles Stewart had to contend throughout the whole campaign; and it more than once, by causing Bernadotte to hold back when his aid was required, brought the fortunes of the Coalition to the very brink of ruin. Reynier, however, disconcerted the Czar not a little by representing in strong terms the contempt felt in France for the military talents and vain, versatile character of the Crown Prince; and in that way, for the first time, shook his views on the subject.[1] *

[1] Koch, i. 279-282; Dan. 94, 95; Burgh. 123, 124; Thiers, xvii. 327, 328.

* See THIERS, xvii. 327, 328. Reynier, a Swiss by birth, but who had been long in the French service, had been made prisoner, and had resisted all the offers of service from the Allies. He was sent back by Alexander to Paris, and he immediately offered his services to Napoleon—an offer, in the present state of the Emperor's fortunes, not a little honourable to the general. He laid

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75. Division between the Czar and Lord Castlereagh and Prince Metternich as to resuming hostilities.

Influenced by these considerations, and animated by an inextinguishable desire of personal vengeance on Napoleon, Alexander no sooner learned that Caulaincourt had not at once, and without conditions, accepted the basis offered him at Chatillon, than he declared his resolution to break off the congress and march at once to Paris, and despatched orders to that effect to his plenipotentiary. Lord Castlereagh, in conjunction with M. de Metternich, opposed this extreme resolution in the strongest manner. M. de Caulaincourt had written to the latter a secret letter, in which he asked whether, if the proposed base were unconditionally accepted, it would lead to a suspension of hostilities. Resting on this document, the British Minister insisted with all his might that the whole object of the war—security for the future—was about to be gained without any further risk or effusion of human blood; and that this being the case, it would be the height of imprudence to break off the conferences, and cast all again on the doubtful issue of the sword, the more especially as, from the accounts just received of Blucher's disasters, there was too much reason to apprehend that fortune was about to change sides, and that the terms now about to be accepted might ere long be no longer within their power. So resolute, however, was Alexander to resume the offensive and march direct on Paris, that all that Castlereagh and Metternich by their united efforts could obtain was the resumption of the congress, and the despatch of a fresh project to the plenipotentiaries at Chatillon, containing the terms on which alone hostilities would be suspended.[1] Meanwhile the orders he sent to Prince Schwartzenberg

Feb. 13. [1] Thiers, xvii. 328, 330, 331; Koch, i. 267-269; Claus. vii. 458.

before the French Government a detail of these strange and confidential conferences with Alexander, which is still preserved in the French archives, and worthy of entire credit, as well from the upright character of its author, as from its entire coincidence with many passages in the *Castlereagh Correspondence*, and the important revelations lately made in Sir R. Wilson's *Memoirs* as to what passed at the conferences at Abo, in 1812, between Alexander and Bernadotte. —*Vide ante*, chap. vii. § 57.

were to prosecute without an hour's delay his advance. The intelligence which soon after arrived of Blucher's successive and very serious defeats rather confirmed the Czar in his determination to push the war *à tout outrance;* he had now no doubt he would enter Paris before him.*

76. Proposals of the Allies, on which a suspension of hostilities was to depend.

The fresh conditions on which the Allies proposed on the 17th February to suspend hostilities were as follows, and it was on their unconditional acceptance that the suspension was to depend: "1. France was to re-enter her ancient limits, with the exception of some rectifications on the frontiers, which were in nowise to derogate from the general principle. 2. France was not to intermingle with the disposal of the ceded territories, nor in general in the regulation of European affairs. 3. Germany should be erected into a federative state; and Holland, with the addition of Belgium, formed into an independent kingdom. 4. Italy would be independent of France, and some provinces in it, to be afterwards determined on, ceded to Austria. 5. Continental Spain should be restored to Ferdinand VII. 6. In return for these concessions, England agreed to restore Martinique and Guadaloupe to France, provided Sweden agreed to the transfer of the latter; but the Cape, with the Isles of France and Bourbon and Malta, were to remain definitively annexed to the British empire." These conditions seem hard towards France, from the number and magnitude of the cessions demanded from that power; but that arose entirely from the immensity of acquisitions, both in terri-

* The following confidential letter from Sir Charles Stewart at this time will show us on what a slender thread the fortunes of the alliance now hung suspended: "A part is playing here in a high quarter I don't approve: still, I am silenced by superior judgment. How much I extricated our commencement and entanglement God only knows!—once in a strong degree committed, without an unexpected convulsion, how depart? It is not *sound* to do so on slight or feigned pretences. I think C. [Castlereagh] set out with this; but I believe your despatch from England, with L. [Liverpool] and B.'s [Bathurst] *longings* for things as they were, have made him rather wink at what is the evident driving in another quarter. A. [Aberdeen] is for pressing; R. [Razumowski] for holding. We are a little passive. . . . I don't care how soon things are at an end here."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* EDWARD COOKE, ESQ., *Chatillon, February* 6, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 243.

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tory and influence, made by her during the course of the revolutionary war, and which she was now required to abandon. France, as now proposed to be reduced to her ancient limits, was still a more extensive and powerful monarchy than that which Louis XIV. ruled, and which the experience alike of past and subsequent times has proved to be stronger than any single power in Europe, and capable of being kept within bounds only by a general coalition.[1]

[1] Protocol, Séance Feb. 17, 1814, MS.; Thiers, xvii. 368.

77. Caulaincourt's advice to Napoleon regarding these terms.

This, accordingly, was the decided opinion of M. de Caulaincourt, who, when the proposals were read out, testified neither surprise nor indignation at them, as the protocol of the proceedings proves.* He asked only for time to communicate them to his master, which was acceded to. On the evening of the same day Caulaincourt wrote to Napoleon as follows: "The proposed conditions, I admit, are not such as could be desired, but means may probably be found to modify them. You will never

* "*Count Stadion.*—We now come to the most essential part—our conferences suspended. The letter addressed by the Duke [of Cadore] to Prince Metternich, in which the armistice was proposed, and an offer made to put certain fortresses into the hands of the Allies, has been communicated to the Allied Courts. They have consulted; and, in order to extend the idea of an armistice into a more general notion, the Allied Courts have resolved on a proposal for a preliminary treaty with the same view.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.—I am well satisfied; this will shortly bring us to a conclusion.* I request to have a copy of it. It appears, then, that you demand the renunciation both of the *title* and of the kingdom of Italy. What is meant to be done with the King of Saxony, the King of Westphalia, and the Viceroy of Italy? We cannot abandon the King of Saxony, who is the only friend who remained faithful to us.

"*Count Stadion.*—An answer will be given, and regulated by a definitive treaty.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—Do you mean to restore his kingdom to the King of Saxony and to the King of Westphalia? The King of Westphalia has been recognised; he must consequently have an indemnity. If the Allies do something in his favour, France will make greater sacrifices; in the contrary case, France will have to make a double sacrifice—first of her own interests, and then of her friends.

"*Count Stadion.*—If you put this question positively, I might answer you, but it will be better to leave it for another conference.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—It is of great importance to us to know whether the Viceroy will be included. . . .

"*Count Stadion.*—I refer that question also to the next conference."—*Protocal, Séance, February* 17, 1814, *MS.*; and *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 550.

again obtain the terms offered at Frankfort until you have driven the Allies into the Rhine; but by making a skilful use of the advantages now gained, you may obtain by way of compromise, if England is satisfied, something more than the limits of 1790, though never what is understood by the phrase 'natural limits.' It would be possible, in fact, by abandoning Spain, Italy, Germany, Holland, Belgium, to obtain Mayence, Coblentz, Cologne—in a word, the line of the Rhine without that of the Scheldt. Certes, such a peace would be well worth the concluding—if not for Napoleon, at least for France. One victory more would insure such terms; it is well now to take them into consideration. I supplicate your Majesty, therefore, not to show yourself as unbending as heretofore, —to recollect that your recent victories do not entitle you to assume the high ground of the Frankfort proposals, although by proposing a moderate counter-project you may make an approximation to them."[1]

[1] Caulaincourt to Napoleon, Feb. 17, 1814; Thiers, xvii. 369.

78. Napoleon's indignant answer.

Very different was the temper of mind with which Napoleon received this communication. "I consider you as in a secluded charter-house, knowing nothing whatever of my affairs, and entirely guided by the impostures with which you are surrounded. As soon as I arrive at Troyes I will send you a *contre projet*, which you will have to lay before the congress. I return thanks to Heaven for having received that note, for there is not a Frenchman whose blood it will not cause to boil with indignation. It is for that reason that I wish myself to make my ultimatum. I am displeased that you have not represented in a note, that to render France as strong as she was in 1789 she *must have her natural limits*, as a compensation for the division of Poland, the destruction of the republic of Venice, the secularisation of the clergy in Germany—in fine, the great acquisitions made by the English in India. Tell them that you await the orders of your Government, and that you must have a considerable time to receive them, since they oblige your couriers

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to make a detour of seventy-two hours, and that three are already missing. I have, in reprisal, ordered the arrest of the English couriers. I am so moved by the infamous proposals which you have sent me, that I consider myself already dishonoured by having put myself in a situation where they could venture to propose them. I will make you acquainted from Troyes or Chatillon with my intentions; but I feel that I would rather lose Paris than submit such proposals to the French people. You always speak of the Bourbons; I would rather see the Bourbons in France with reasonable terms, than subscribe the infamous proposals you have sent to me."[1] *

[1] Napoleon to Caulaincourt, Surville, Feb. 19, 1814; Thiers, xvii. 369, 370.

79. Napoleon's secret letter to the Emperor of Austria. Feb. 19.

The counter-proposals transmitted by Napoleon to the conference demanded the natural limits as far as Dusseldorf, and beyond that the line of the Meuse; in Italy, an indemnity for Prince Eugene, and a fair share of influence to France in the adjustment of European affairs. Along with this official communication, however, he transmitted two private letters, one from himself to his father-in-law, the Emperor Francis, and one from Berthier to Prince

* The following important letter from Napoleon to Caulaincourt, recalling the full powers formerly sent him to save Paris, was written at Nangis on the morning of the 18th, the day after the meeting at Chatillon, and on its road on the 19th, when the above despatch was sent off:—"I gave you a *carte blanche* only to save Paris and avoid a battle, which was then the sole hope of the nation. That battle has now taken place. Providence has blessed our arms. I have made 30,000 or 40,000 prisoners, taken 200 pieces of cannon and a great number of generals, all without a serious or doubtful encounter. Yesterday I cut up the army of Prince Schwartzenberg, and I hope to destroy it before it has repassed the frontiers. Your attitude should continue the same, nevertheless; do everything to procure peace; but my intention now is that you should *sign nothing without my authority, because I alone know my position.* Generally speaking, I will only consent to an honourable peace, such as on the basis proposed at Frankfort. My position is undeniably better now than it was at that time. They could then set me at defiance: I had gained no advantage over them, and they were on the verge of my territories. *Now* I have gained immense advantages over them—so great, indeed, that a military career of twenty years, attended with no small celebrity, can exhibit no parallel to them. Still I am willing to cease hostilities, and to allow the enemy to retire peaceably, if they will conclude peace on the basis of Frankfort." At the end of this letter, which was dictated to Baron Fain, these words were added in the handwriting of Napoleon, "*Ne signez rien, ne signez rien.*"—NAPOLEON *to* CAULAINCOURT, *February* 18, 1814; FAIN, 297, 298; *Pièces Just.*

Schwartzenberg. In the former, which was drawn up with infinite care, he said, "Called by Victory, she has pronounced her decision. My armies are as good as ever, and will soon be as numerous. I have every confidence in the result of the campaign, if it shall be prolonged. At this moment I am marching on Troyes; the next battle will be between a French and an Austrian army; I believe I shall be victorious, and no one can be surprised at such a result. But having experienced the hazards of war, I am willing to consider that matter as doubtful, and to reason the matter upon a double hypothesis. If I am victorious, the Coalition is annihilated; and in that event I shall be found as imperious and exacting as ever, for I shall then be authorised to become so by my dangers and my triumphs. If, on the contrary, I am defeated, the balance of power in Europe will be more seriously affected than it has yet been; but it will be to *the advantage of Russia, and at the expense of Austria.* You will speedily, in such an event, find yourself more galled than you have hitherto been by a haughty rival. What have you in reality to gain by such a battle, as in the one case it will cause you to lose all the advantage you have gained by the battle of Leipsic, and in the other will render you more dependent than ever on Russia? France is willing to offer you immediately, without the hazard of a battle, all that you desire. In Italy, for example, she will immediately repass the Alps. Thus, without referring to bonds of consanguinity, which, after all, are not to be despised, the true interest of Austria is to conclude peace, and on the terms which she herself has offered at Frankfort."[1]

[1] Napoleon to Emperor Francis, March 19, 1814; Thiers, xvii. 371, 372.

80. Napoleon, after the victory of Vauchamps, turns on Schwartzenberg.

This very specious, and in many respects just letter, was received by Prince Metternich, as well as the one at the same time sent to Prince Schwartzenberg; and, as a proof of the entire fidelity of Austria to her engagements, they were both immediately sent at once to the council of the Allied sovereigns. This was by no means what the

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French Emperor had intended, and it contributed not a little to strengthen the bonds of the Grand Alliance. This was the more important, as the military successes gained by him during the last few days had gone far to loosen them, and, in fact, brought the Coalition to hang together only by a thread. The very day after the battle of Vauchamps, instead of taking any repose to himself or giving it to his wearied troops, he moved back in order to fall on Schwartzenberg, who, like Blucher, had been tempted, by the difficulty of getting supplies for the immense army which he commanded, to scatter his columns in a way to the last degree perilous in presence of such a general as Napoleon, lying in a manner on his flank, and watching an opportunity to strike a blow at some of his detached corps. The Young and Old Guards, Leval's division, with the superb cavalry of St Germain, just come up from Spain, arrived by a forced march that very night at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, while he himself pushed on to Meaux, where he joined the weakened corps of Macdonald, which had received some reinforcements, and was about 12,000 strong. He moved the next day from Meaux across to Guignes, in the valley of the Seine, close to which point Victor and Oudinot were in position, behind the small stream of the Yeres, striving to arrest the advanced-guard of Schwartzenberg's army. By concentrating all his troops in that neighbourhood, and drawing every disposable sabre and bayonet from Paris and all the adjacent towns, he succeeded in collecting 60,000 men under his immediate orders, the largest body he had ever had in hand since the Allies had crossed the Rhine. With this force, which comprised the entire Guards, Young and Old, the corps of Macdonald, Victor, and Oudinot, the whole cavalry, and Leval's division, he set out early next day to attack the corps of Wittgenstein at Nangis,[1] supported by that of Wrede at Donnemavie, the two most advanced of Schwartzenberg's army, numbering together nearly 50,000 men, and who

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[1] Fain, 102, 103; Koch, i. 310, 311; Vaud. i. 377; Thiers, xvii. 332-336.

were moving on, totally unconscious of the danger which was impending.

The Russian advanced-guard, under Count Pahlen, consisting of 3000 infantry and 1500 horse, which lay at Movmant, on the road from Guignes to Nangis, was the first to be assailed. Finding himself completely outnumbered, Pahlen commenced a retreat, which was at first conducted in good order, in square, with the guns at the angles and the cavalry in the rear. But ere long the attacks of the incomparable horse just come up from Spain became so impetuous that the cavalry were driven off and dispersed, the guns taken, and the infantry left exposed. Charged with the utmost fury on three sides at once, the squares were at length broken, and one regiment, that of Revel, totally annihilated. Wittgenstein himself, who had hurried to the front when the firing began, was swept away by the torrent, and narrowly escaped being made prisoner. In this disastrous affair the Allies lost 3000 men, of whom 2100 were made prisoners, and eleven guns. On arriving at Nangis, Napoleon divided his forces. Oudinot and Kellermann pursued Wittgenstein by Provins towards Nogent, Macdonald pressed back Wrede's Bavarians by Donnemavie on Bray, and Victor was ordered to march with all expedition by Villeneuve upon Montereau, to seize the bridge over the Seine there. In the course of this movement Victor came upon a Bavarian division near Valjouan, which threw itself into square, and endeavoured to effect its retreat. After a sharp conflict it was broken and driven back, with the loss of 2500 men, of whom 1500 were made prisoners. Nothing but the neglect of General L'Heritier to charge the fugitives, when first thrown into disorder, with his horse, preserved the division from total ruin.[1]

81. Combats of Nangis and Villeneuve.

[1] Koch, i. 315-318; Vaud. i. 315; Burgh. 141, 142; Plotho, iii. 212-214; Thiers, xvii. 340, 341.

The advantage already gained was very great, but it was as nothing to what the Emperor had designed. His intention was to have pushed Victor on to the bridge of Montereau, forming one of the main lines of retreat for

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82. Advance of Napoleon to Montereau, where he is met by the proposal for an armistice from Schwartzenberg. Feb. 18.

the Allies over the Seine, and by seizing which he would have intercepted the communications of all the troops who had passed that point on their way down the left bank of the river, and then fallen in succession on their columns retiring from Fontainebleau and the neighbourhood, which would have placed 15,000 or 20,000 men in his power. But such was the fatigue which the Marshal and his followers had undergone during the long marches of the preceding days, that they were unable to comply with the order he had received to push on without halting a moment to Montereau and seize the bridge, and were compelled to halt at Salins, some miles from it, during the night. Napoleon was highly indignant when he heard of this deviation from his orders, which had the effect of enabling a part of the enemy's forces to get back in safety during the night; and at three in the morning he sent positive orders to Victor instantly to rise, and, whatever state he was in, pursue his march without a moment's delay to Montereau. He himself followed in the same direction with the whole Guards and cuirassiers, and directed Oudinot on Nogent and Macdonald on Bray, with orders, if they could not carry the bridges at those points, to converge also on Montereau. On arriving at Nangis he had received the most decisive proof of the reality and magnitude of his successes by the arrival of a messenger from Schwartzenberg with proposals for AN ARMISTICE.[1]

Vaud. i. 315, 316; Koch, i. 315; Burgh. 141; Thiers, xvii. 341-343; Plotho, iii. 212, 213.

83. Consternation at the Austrian head-quarters.

To understand how this great change came about, it must be premised that the Allied counsels at the head-quarters of Prince Schwartzenberg were far from being unanimous; nor were the sovereigns there assembled by any means actuated by the spirit of concord which their plenipotentiaries exhibited at Chatillon to Caulaincourt, who said they acted as one man. On the contrary, the usual passions which first divide, and in the end so often dissolve, confederacies, were in full activity, and threatened the most alarming results. The Confederacy, already

sufficiently divided by the question of the settlement of the throne of France, which was thought to be at its disposal, were still more violently distracted by the yet stronger passion of fear, when the successes of Napoleon had destroyed half of Blücher's army, and threatened ere long to do the same to that of Schwartzenberg. The Austrian generals were at first very imperfectly informed of the disasters of the Army of Silesia; and as long as they were confined to that host they made light of them, and abated nothing of their haughty bearing at Chatillon. But when the tempest fell on themselves, and every hour was bringing in advices of the defeat or capture of detached corps of the Grand Army, scattered over a space twenty leagues broad, they speedily came to view matters in a very different light. Passing at once, as irresolute characters generally do, from the extreme of confidence to that of depression, they were seized with consternation, and suddenly became as anxious to hasten as they had previously been to avert a pacification.* In vain the Emperor Alexander and Lord Castlereagh strenuously insisted on the bolder course, and urged the immediate concentration of the army and giving battle, rather than give Napoleon the immense moral advantage of boasting that his enemies, recently so haughty, were now suing for a cessation of hostilities. Their representations produced no sort of effect. The proverb held good, that in presence of real danger a counsel of war never fights.[1] The obvious danger of Schwartzenberg's detached columns being cut up in detail as those of Blucher's had been,

[1] Thiers, xvii. 342, 343; Burgh. 144.

* "*Everybody seems in ill-humour, not exempt from anxiety.* General Knesebeck's opinion is, that there will be a great battle in this neighbourhood: others think Buonaparte is not strong enough to risk an attack, or even to oppose the junction of Blucher with this army. I am very anxious to know how your *besogne* goes on, and whether late success will make Buonaparte rise in his pretensions. I don't think this retreat ought to do so; because, however discouraging the moral effect may be on the public mind, he, viewing it as a military man, cannot but feel that the situation of the Allies is very much strengthened by it."—MR GEORGE JACKSON *to* SIR CHARLES STEWART, *Troyes, February* 19, 1814, *midnight; Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 282, 283.

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overpowered every other consideration, and it was determined by a great majority to send Schwartzenberg's aide-de-camp, Count Parr, to Napoleon's headquarters to solicit an armistice.*

84. Battle of Montereau. Feb. 18.

Count Parr arrived with the letter of Prince Schwartzenberg at Napoleon's headquarters at Nangis on the evening of the 17th, when he was giving his orders for a grand attack on Montereau the next morning. Concealing his joy under an affectation of indifference, he refused to admit the messenger into his presence, but received the Austrian general's letter, which he coolly put in his pocket after reading, and sent word to the envoy that he would answer it at his leisure. Meanwhile, instead of suspending, he set out the next morning for Montereau, and continued with more activity than ever his orders and preparations for an attack. On arriving on the northern heights overlooking the town, as the guns of the Guard came up, the Emperor took his station in the midst of them, and himself directed the pointing and elevation of those next to him; returning thus in the close of his career to his old occupation of a gunner, in which he had commenced it at the siege of Toulon twenty-one years before! So irritated was he at Marshal Victor for not having advanced to seize the bridge the night before, that in a fit of passion he

* "I found the headquarters on the move at Troyes [on the 19th], and thought it best to keep near them till we saw daylight. Two propositions of armistice, proceeding from us, *which I cannot too much condemn*, and a retreat, perhaps not unwise if boldly and candidly avowed, have materially injured our authority, and produced nothing but two very haughty and insulting letters from Buonaparte and Berthier to the Emperor Francis and his General. We are now falling back towards Langres, not, as far as I can learn, much pushed by the enemy: Indeed, I doubt the possibility of his advancing boldly, leaving Blucher, now with 80,000 men, on his left flank, which army will in a few days be equal to Buonaparte's own. If he turns on Blucher, we shall turn on him. *The political question has been miserably prejudiced by opposite extremes of management;* at one time too *proud to listen to anything*, at another so impatient to be delivered from the presence of our enemy as to make our prolongation at Chatillon almost ludicrous. I hope we have yet more of equanimity in our counsels than a bystander would predicate. I shall not leave the headquarters at present."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD ABERDEEN, *Chaumont, February* 25, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 289-291.

deprived him of the command of his corps, which he bestowed on General Gerard, though, when the first transports were over, he gave him the command of two divisions of the Young Guard, so as to have his old companion-in-arms near his person. The descent from where Napoleon was to the bridge, the grand object of contention between the two parties, was strongly occupied by the Wurtembergers, who lined all the walls and enclosures by which the sunny slopes were intersected. Led by General Chataux, the French made a vigorous attack on this strong position, striving to drive the enemy down the slope, and to cross the bridge with them. But if the onset was fierce, the resistance was not less determined, under the Prince Royal of Wurtemberg, who evinced on that trying occasion the courage of a grenadier united to the coolness of a general. He long kept the enemy at bay, and replied with fatal effect from his guns to the concentrated fire of the artillery of the Guard; but at length, seeing his flank about to be turned by the advance of the cavalry of the Guard under Pajol, he was forced to retire towards the bridge. His retreat was that of the lion, however; but he was so closely followed by the victorious French that he narrowly escaped being made prisoner by them when crossing the bridge, which fell, with the whole town, into the hands of the victors. In this well-fought action the French lost 3000 of their best troops, who were struck down in the fight; but the Allies lost an equal number in killed and wounded, besides as many prisoners, and six guns and four standards. Napoleon testified the greatest joy at this glorious success, which promised the most important results. "Courage," said he to his friends, when standing among the guns exposed to the enemy's fire; "the ball is not yet cast which is to kill me." "My heart is relieved," said he, as he crossed the bridge of Montereau, surrounded by his Guards; "I have saved the capital of my empire."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 349-351; Burgh. 146; Fain, 107, 108; Koch, i. 323, 324; Volderndorf, iv. 127.

Such was the Emperor's exultation at these important

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triumphs, that he openly boasted that "he was nearer Munich than the Allies were to Paris." This day he wrote two letters which had a material influence on his future destiny. The first of these was the letter already quoted, addressed to Caulaincourt, in which he recalled the full powers previously given as to signing at Chatillon any terms which might be necessary to prevent Paris being taken.[1] The second was a letter, hardly less important, to Eugene Beauharnais, recalling in like manner a conditional order to evacuate Italy and fall back on Lyons as soon as Murat declared himself, which he had sent to the Viceroy in the middle of January, but which, owing to Murat having not openly done so, Eugene had not yet acted on. He now recalled that order, and enjoined Eugene to defend Italy to the last extremity.* These let-

85. Counter-orders sent to Prince Eugene to retain Lombardy.

1 Ante, ch. xii. § 78, note.

* On the 18th February, directly after the battle of Montereau, Napoleon wrote to Eugene :—"J'ai reçu votre lettre du 9 Fevrier. J'ai vu avec plaisir les avantages que vous avez obtenus ; s'ils avaient été un peu plus decisifs et que l'ennemi y fut compromis, nous aurions pu garder l'Italie. Tascher vous fera connaitre l'état des choses ici. J'ai détruit l'Armée de Silésie, composée des Russes et des Prussiens ; j'ai commencé hier abattre Schwartzenberg ; j'ai dans quatre jours fait 30,000 à 40,000 prisonniers, puis une vingtième des généraux, 500 à 600 officiers, 150 à 200 pièces de canon, et une immense quantité des bagages ; et je n'ai perdu presq' personne. La cavalerie ennemie est à bas, les chevaux sont morts de fatigue : ils sont beaucoup diminués, d'ailleurs ils se sont trop etendus. Il est donc possible, si la fortune continue à nous sourire, que l'ennemi soit poussé en grande désordre hors de notres frontières, *et que nous poussions alors conserver l'Italie.* Dans cette supposition le Roi de Naples changerait probablement son parti."—NAPOLÉON *au* VICE-ROI D'ITALIE, *Montereau*, 18 *Fevrier* 1814.

On the 19th February Napoleon said to the aide-de-camp, Tascher, who was to carry his orders to Prince Eugene :—"Tascher, tu vas partir de suite pour l'Italie. Tu ne t'arrêterais pas à Paris que quelques heures pour y voir ta femme. Tu diras à Eugene que j'ai été vainqueur à Champaubert et Montmirail des meilleures troupes de la Coalition ; que Schwartzenberg m'a demandé cette nuit par un de ces aides-de-camp un armistice, mais que je ne suis pas dupé, car c'est pour me leurrer et gagner du temps. Tu lui diras aussi que si les ordres que j'ai donné dès hier au Maréchal Victor de se porter sur Melun et Montereau il en serait resulté la perte des corps Bavarois et des Wirtembergeois pris au dépourvu par ce mouvement ; et qu'alors n'ayant devant lui que *les Autrichiens, qui sont des mauvais soldats et des canaille,* il les aurait mené à corps de fouet déporté ; mais que rien de ce qui avait été ordonné n'ayant été fait, il fallait recourir à des nouvelles chances. Tu diras à Eugene que je lui *donne l'ordre de garder l'Italie le plus longtemps qu'il pourra* de s'y défendre ; qu'il ne s'occupe pas de l'armée Napolitaine, composée de mauvais soldats, et du Roi de Naples qui est un fou, un ingrat. En cas qu'il soit obligé de céder de

ters, given below, from Prince Eugene's Memoirs, are very important, both as indicating how set Napoleon was on the retention of his external conquests, and how readily he reverted to them with the first gleam of returning success, and as affording decisive evidence that the charges brought against that noble character by Marshal Marmont and others, of having ruined the Emperor by disobeying his orders to recross the Alps and concentrate with him for the last struggle, were unfounded. The next day Napoleon received from Caulaincourt the Allied ultimatum offered at Chatillon on the 17th. He instantly, as before mentioned, wrote back in terms of the strongest indignation rejecting it, but directing Caulaincourt to gain time, continue the negotiation, and contend for the line of the Rhine down to Dusseldorf, and thence that of the Meuse to the sea. The same day he sent back Schwartzenberg's aide-de-camp, Count Parr, with the letters above given to the Emperor of Austria and the Prince Marshal.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 360, and Mem. de Prince Eugene, x. 100-110.

Setting out on the 21st from Montereau, he arrived, as will be hereafter explained, before Troyes on the 23d. He was met on the march by Prince Wenceslas de Lichtenstein, the bearer from Schwartzenberg of a renewed proposal for an armistice on the part of the Allied sovereigns. After expressing great indignation at the reported countenance given to the Bourbons by the Allies, and receiving the strongest assurances from Prince Lichtenstein of Austria's having no participation therein, he

86. Napoleon's instructions to M. de Flahault as to an armistice. Feb. 24.

terrain, de ne laisser dans les places fortes qu'il sera forcé d'abandonner que juste les soldats Italiens necessaire pour en faire le service ; de ne *perdre de terrain que pied à pied en se defendant;* et qu'enfin s'il était serré, de trop près, de réunir tous ces moyens, de se rétirer sous les murs de Milan d'y livrer bataille. Que s'il est vaincu d'opérer sa retraite sur les Alpes comme il pourra ; *ne céder la terrain qu'à la dernier extrémité.* Dis à Eugene que je suis content de lui ; qu'il témoigne ma satisfaction à l'armée d'Italie ; et que sur toute la ligue il fasse tirer cent coups de canon en réjouissance des victoires de Champaubert et Montmirail. A Turin tu diras au Prince Borghese *de contremander l'évacuation* de la Toscane s'il en est encore temps, mais dans le cas contraire d'arrêter les troupes dans leur mouvement, et de défendre les différents positions en avant de la ville de Gene, de mettre cette ville dans un état imposant de défense, et de donner connaissance de ses dispositions au Vice-Roi."—*Mémoires du* PRINCE EUGENE, vi. 100-110.

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deferred his answer till the next day. In virtue of a verbal convention, he entered Troyes that night without resistance, and the next morning sent an envoy to the Allied posts, as agreed on. The unbounded feeling of confidence with which the Emperor was inspired by this brilliant succession of victories, was clearly evinced by the instructions which he gave to M. de Flahault, the envoy whom he sent to meet those of the Allies — M. Schouvaloff on the part of Russia, De Rauch on that of Prussia, and Langenau on that of Austria—at Lusigny, to arrange the terms on which an armistice was to be concluded. It was obviously for the interest of France to continue hostilities, and take advantage of the marvellous succession of victories which had recently signalised their arms. Napoleon was desirous, however, of keeping up the shadow of a negotiation, in order to enable him to profit immediately by any successes that might be gained. He sent M. de Flahault, therefore, to the place of conference, but with instructions which he was well aware would prevent the negotiation coming to any pacific result. They were, "to decline any proposal for a suspension of hostilities during the parleying; to insist on the offers of Frankfort being made the basis of any armistice; and to treat of the line of demarcation between the two armies, in the event of this basis being acceded to, in such a way as should leave France in possession of *Mayence and Antwerp.*" These terms were proposed by Flahault to the Allied commissioners at Lusigny on the

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day after Napoleon entered Troyes. The Allied commissioners, whose instructions were to conclude no armistice on the Frankfort basis, but only on condition of France re-entering her ancient limits, refused these terms, upon which M. de Flahault, after a reference to Napoleon, altered his proposals. He now made no mention of the Frankfort basis, but offered a suspension of arms upon conditions that left the French in possession of *Antwerp* in the Low Countries, Mayence on the Rhine, and Cham-

bery in Savoy. The meaning of this was sufficiently clear, and ominous of the fate of the conferences which were still going on at Chatillon. By the possession of Chambery, and consequently of the pass over Mont Cenis, he secured an entrance into Italy, and the communication with Eugene's forces in Lombardy. By the possession of Mayence he held in his hands the keys of Germany, and could at any time renew his schemes of conquest in that country; while by means of Antwerp he retained the command of the Low Countries, and could at a moment's warning revive his long-cherished projects of aggression from that stronghold against this country.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 402-405; Fain, 122, 123.

87. Counter-project of the Allies, which Napoleon rejects.

It was not to be expected that the Allies would agree to a line of demarcation pointing so clearly as this did to future and indefinite projects of external conquest. It was accordingly immediately and unanimously rejected by them, and a counter-project proposed, founded very much on the principle of *uti possidetis*. The line they proposed was to advance in the Low Countries as far as Lille, which, of course, left Antwerp in its present blockaded state; it consented to recede a little in Champagne and Burgundy; was to leave Chaumont and Langres open for discussion; but they absolutely insisted on retaining Chambery in Savoy. Thus the Allies, in their line, evinced as clearly as Napoleon on what object they were set, and left no solution of the matters in dispute possible but by the sword. Napoleon, as a matter of course, rejected the Allied line; and it might have been expected that after this, as the views of both parties were clearly declared and utterly irreconcilable, the negotiations, both at Lusigny and Chatillon, would have been broken up. They were continued, however, though both well knew they could come to nothing, because it was for the interest of both parties to keep up the semblance of a negotiation, in order to be able to take immediate advantage of any military success either might gain, and which both were sanguine enough to anticipate.[2]

[2] Thiers, xvii. 406, 407.

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88. Caulaincourt's pacific and earnest advice to Napoleon.

Although Napoleon's confidence in his star was entirely restored by the recent victories which he had gained, and he repeatedly said to those around him "that he was nearer Munich than the Allies were to Paris," the case was very different with Caulaincourt, whose mind was of a less sanguine temperament than that of his imperial master, and who, in contact at Chatillon with the Allied plenipotentiaries, who *seemed* to be so united, was in better condition than his sovereign to judge of the force which would be brought against him, and the real influences of any partial successes upon the ultimate issue of the contest.* He was altogether desperate at not receiving again full powers from Napoleon, and wrote to him in the most earnest manner, entreating him to prevent the negotiations being broken off, and pointing out the imminence of the danger which threatened him if hostilities were not suspended.†

* "After dinner, on 22d February, Caulaincourt began by observing to me that the Emperor had transferred his headquarters to Bar-sur-Aube. I told him that I had heard the report. He went on to enlarge on the successes of Napoleon. He may have exaggerated the amount, but, on the whole, was sufficiently accurate. He said that if Napoleon had lost military reputation, it must be confessed that he had now regained it; that everything had been done by his personal interference, and in consequence of his individual exertions. He said that for his own (Caulaincourt's) part, he thought *it made no difference in the state of the war*, but that, by saving the *amour propre* of Buonaparte, it gave him a good opportunity of concluding peace with some degree of credit. . . . He continued to say, that though he was ready to make the same sacrifices for peace as when he first came to Chatillon, we had done everything in our power by the *form* of the *project* to make it difficult. He said that he must be supposed to know his own master, and that he was satisfied, if it had been possible to *see you for an hour*, he might have so changed the form without altering the substance as to make it palatable to Buonaparte, instead of being revolting."—LORD ABERDEEN *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Chatillon, February* 23, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 287, 288.

† "The question about to be decided is so important, it may have at the moment consequences so fatal, that I regard it as a paramount duty to recur again, even at the risk of incurring your Majesty's displeasure, to what I have already so frequently insisted on. There is no weakness, Sire, in my opinion; but I see the dangers which menace France and the throne of your Majesty, and I conjure you to prevent them. We must make sacrifices, and we must do so immediately: if we do not take care, the opportunity of doing so will escape us, as at Prague: the circumstances of this moment have a clearer resemblance to those which then occurred than your Majesty may be aware. At Prague, peace was not concluded, and Austria declared against us because we would not believe that the time fixed for the closing of the Congress would be

The great difficulty with which Caulaincourt had to contend was the impossibility of extracting a definite answer or specific instructions from Napoleon, who was determined to keep everything open in diplomacy, and make his terms or answers entirely dependent on his position in the field. Such was the agony which that able plenipotentiary underwent on this account, that he has himself told us the only surprising thing is that it did not *make him go mad*, and that the Emperor's power of evading the most precise demand for instructions was one of the most remarkable features in his mind.[1]*

[1] Lond. 277; Fain, 302; Burgh. 155, 156; Hard. xii. 356, 257.

89. Extreme division in the Allied councils.

But the truth is, that on this occasion Napoleon was, unknown to himself, nearer the truth than his diplomatist; and his words were literally true, that he was nearer Munich than they were to Paris. This arose neither from his military strength, nor their military weakness, but solely from their divisions. The Austrian statesmen, who all along had been reluctant to push matters to extremities with the son-in-law of their Emperor, and who in secret were not a little jealous and apprehensive of the rising power and grandeur of Russia, were seized with the

rigorously enforced. Here the negotiations are on the point of being broken off because we cannot believe that a question of such immense importance may depend on the answer we may make before a certain day. The more I consider what has passed, the more I am convinced that if we do not go into the *contre projets* demanded, but insist upon modifications on the basis of Frankfort, all is closed. I venture to say this because I feel that neither the glory of your Majesty nor the power of France depends on the possession of Antwerp, or on any other of our new frontiers."—CAULAINCOURT *to* NAPOLEON, *March* 6, 1814; FAIN, 301, 302; *Pièces Just.*

* "Pendant ces négociations (à Châtillon) je ne conçois pas comment je ne suis pas devenu fou. Le temps des illusions était passé. L'actualité était dévorante; et à mes lettres je ne recevais que des réponses évasives, alors qu'il eût fallut traiter à tout prix. L'avenir nous restait: à présent il ne nous reste qu'un tombeau. Mes lettres n'étaient qu'une pâle copie de ce que je disais à l'Empereur dans nos entretiens particuliers. J'insistais pour qu'il me donnât son ultimatum sincère, afin que je fusse en mésure de terminer invariablement avec les plénipotentiaires Alliés, qui avaient reçu certainement des instructions positives. Il me faut être vrai, car ceci est devenu de l'histoire: *l'Empereur ne répondait jamais catégoriquement à cette demande.* Il éludait avec une merveilleuse adresse, de livrer le secret de sa pensée intime; cette manière est un des traits saillants de son genre d'esprit."—*Souvenirs de* CAULAINCOURT, i. 302, 329, 330.

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utmost apprehension at the recent disasters, especially those which had befallen the Grand Army, and loudly counselled a retreat, and immediate acceptance of the French terms, as the only way of extricating their army out of its present perilous situation. Fame and rumour had, as usual with the turn of fortune, immensely augmented the enemy's resources: they were ignorant that he had fought all his battles with the same troops; they believed that, instead of 60,000, he had 120,000 men under his orders, ready to deal out destruction alternately to the Army of Silesia and the Grand Army, which, in fact, by fatigue, sickness, detachments, and the sword, had lost a third of its strength since it entered France. The old *prestige* of Napoleon, which had been all but lost by the disasters of the Russian and German campaigns, returned in full force; he was on the way to become invincible, because he was thought to be so. Prince Metternich, nearly alone in the Austrian Cabinet, combated these desponding views, and earnestly joined with Lord Castlereagh and the Emperor Alexander in urging the necessity of close union and vigorous prosecution of the war. The latter was so impressed with the perilous nature of the crisis, that he wrote and laid before the Allied sovereigns an able memoir on the state of affairs, which deserves to be studied as one of the most valuable contemporary monuments of the age.[1] *

[1] Dan. 189-191; Hard. xii. 351; Lond. 281, 282.

* "Victory having brought us to Frankfort, the Allies offered to France conditions of peace which were *then* considered proportionate to the successes which had been gained: at that period these advantages might have been called the object of the war. I strongly opposed the proposal to negotiate *then*, not because I did not desire peace, but because I thought that time would offer us more favourable opportunities, when we had proved to the enemy our superiority over him. All are now convinced of the justice of my argument, for to it we are indebted for the incalculable difference between the terms offered at Frankfort and Chatillon; that is, the *restoration by France of territories; without which Germany and Italy would be lost on the first offensive movement.*

"The destruction of the enemy's *political* power does not constitute the grand aim of the efforts which it remains for us to make; but it may become so, if the fortune of war, the example of Paris, and the evident inclination of the inhabitants of the provinces of France, shall give the Allies the opportunity of proclaiming it. I do not share the opinion of the Allies on the greater or

But by a singular coincidence, at the very time when the affairs of the Alliance were in such peril from the divergence of the views of the great powers as to the prosecution of the war, and when nothing but a cordial understanding between Great Britain and Russia could be relied on to keep it together, a separate coolness from other causes had got between these powers, which threatened to prevent it. The first of these arose from a pecuniary demand advanced by Russia at this time, which Lord Castlereagh was not inclined to admit. England, as the grand paymaster, experienced now the usual fate of those who have been over-liberal in their advances; her resources were thought to be inexhaustible, and that she was the fit object of spoliation to every applicant. Among the rest, the British Government were at this critical time anxiously pressed to undertake a joint responsibility with Russia of a debt of 80,000,000 florins (£6,400,000), which the latter power owed to Holland. In the present state of the Russians it was quite under-

90. Separate jealousies between Russia and Great Britain.

less degree of importance attached by them to the *dethronement of Napoleon*, if that measure can be justified on the grounds of wisdom. On the contrary, I should consider that event as the completion of the deliverance of Europe—as the brightest example of justice and morality it is possible to afford to the world, and as the happiest event for France herself, whose internal condition must always have an influence on the tranquillity of her neighbours. Nobody is more convinced than I am of the inconstancy of fortune in war; yet I do not reckon a partial failure, or even the loss of a battle, as a misfortune which should in one day deprive us of the fruit of our victories. I am convinced that the skill of our generals, the valour of our troops, our superiority in cavalry, the reinforcements which are following us, and the force of public opinion, will never suffer us to fall so low as some seem to apprehend. I am by no means averse to continuing the negotiations at Chatillon, or giving to Caulaincourt the explanation he desires regarding the future destiny of Europe, provided France returns to her old frontiers. As to the armistice which is requested in the letter to Prince Metternich, I conceive this proceeding of the French plenipotentiary to be contrary to the existing usages of negotiation, and the proposal to be advantageous only to the enemy. I am as much convinced as ever that all probabilities are in favour of a successful issue, if the Allies keep to the views and obligations by which they have hitherto been guided with reference to the grand object, *the destruction of the enemy's armies*. With a good understanding among ourselves, their success will be complete, and checks will easily be borne. I do not think that the time has arrived for us to stop short; and I trust that, as in former conjunctures, new events will show us when that time has arrived."—*Memoir to the Allied Sovereigns by the Emperor Alexander, Feb.* 15, 1814; DANILEFSKY, *Guerre de* 1814, pp. 88 89.

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stood that "guaranteeing" this debt was, in other words, becoming bound to pay it; and to this the British Cabinet, adverting to the enormous advances already made by Great Britain during the war, was by no means inclined to agree. It required no small address, however, to elude this demand, which had been made by Russia from the beginning of the war, and was now brought forward by the Czar as a condition of his acquiescing in the arrangements proposed by Lord Castlereagh, on the eve of a general pacification, on matters in which the interests of Great Britain were more immediately concerned. Count Razumoffsky, the Russian minister and plenipotentiary, with reason relying on the vast sacrifices made by Russia during the war, and the commanding position she now occupied in it, pressed this point upon Lord Castlereagh with some indications of temper at its having been so long refused. The latter adjourned the difficulty by saying he must refer it to his Government, without giving the Russian minister any reason to conclude it would be conceded, and this was done with so much grace and courtesy, that, like Marlborough, he gained more by the refusal than any other man would have done by the concession of the object sought.*

The other subject of difference between the Emperor of Russia and Lord Castlereagh was much more serious, for it went to the main object of the war. It has been already shown that the Emperor was by no means averse to the dethronement of Napoleon, and passionately de-

* "Hardenberg agrees to sign my circular note to the Allied sovereigns; Austria is quite unqualified in her stipulation; Prussia not less so in substance; the accompanying note from *Count Nesselrode will explain a little of the temper of Russia.* I have seen Count Razumoffsky; the object is to get Great Britain and Holland to take upon them jointly a debt of 80,000,000 florins which Russia owes in Holland. This demand was pressed upon us early in the war, and refused. *I gave the Russian minister no sort of encouragement,* and have no notion that our Parliament would listen to such an arrangement. And why pay Russia rather than Austria and Prussia? It comes as a condition with the worse grace, after our recent gratuitous concession to Denmark, to fulfil a Russian engagement. I regret, however, that any ostensible step should have been taken to prejudice the question of ultimate possession."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD CLANCARTY, *Chatillon, February* 20, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence,* ix. 284.

sirous of entering Paris as a conqueror at the head of his Guards; and in this desire, if peace could not otherwise be won, all the Allies concurred. But they were by no means equally unanimous as to what was to *follow* this conquest, and what dynasty was to succeed that of the dethroned Emperor. Austria looked naturally to a regency of which Marie-Louise was to be the head, and which might preserve the throne for the grandson of the Emperor Francis. Alexander was still possessed with his strange idea of putting Bernadotte on the throne of France; and he persisted in this design even after, by his imprudent revelation of it at Abo to the Crown Prince, he had caused him to be so backward in the war as had more than once brought the fortunes of the Coalition to the very brink of ruin. Perfectly aware of the division which this question, when it could no longer be avoided, would cause, Lord Castlereagh's main endeavour had been to adjourn it in the mean time, and prevent it from interfering with the main object of the war—that of reducing and coercing the military power of France, into whose hands soever it should ultimately fall. It required great prudence and address to prevent the division on this subject splitting asunder the Alliance, for each of the great powers was naturally desirous of putting a protegé of their own on the throne of Napoleon. Judge, then, of the consternation of Lord Castlereagh when he discovered, from a confidential communication from the Russian minister, that the Prince Regent had had a secret interview with Prince Lieven, the Russian ambassador in London, at which his Royal Highness had expressed himself in the strongest terms, at the very time when the Congress was sitting at Chatillon, on the impossibilty of making any peace which could be durable with Napoleon, and the expediency of putting *the Bourbons* on the throne of France![1]*

91. Imprudent declaration of the Prince Regent to the Russian ambassador in favour of the Bourbons.

[1] Lord Castlereagh to Lord Liverpool, Chatillon, Feb. 18, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 266.

* "Le Prince Régent me fit mander de me rendre chez lui hier [25 Janvier]. . . . Il me dit que l'Europe entière, et l'Angleterre en particulier, reconnaissait dans l'Empereur le libérateur de tous, le chef de cette coalition auguste

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92. Increasing irritation of the Russian and Prussian officers against the Austrians.

Serious as were these causes of discord and embarrassment in the Allied counsels at this the most critical period of the war, they yet yielded in importance to the animosity which, in consequence of the disasters they had undergone, had grown up between the Prussian and Russian generals on one side, and the Austrian on the other. This had now risen to such a pitch in consequence of the retreat of the Grand Army and evacuation of Troyes,

qu'il guidait encore, après l'avoir délivrée pour accomplir le but glorieux de la liberté de l'Europe et de la sureté de tous les Etats; . . . que c'était l'instant d'assurer pour des siècles le bonheur de l'Europe ; qu'une paix, quelqu'avantageuse qu'elle pût être, *faite avec Napoléon*, n'assurerait jamais qu'une trève plus ou moins longue à l'humanité; que l'histoire de toute sa vie présentait une série de mauvaise foi, d'atrocité, et d'ambition ; et que le sang de toute l'Europe n'aurait coulé que pour un repos très problématique s'il devoit reposer sur les traités conclus avec le perturbateur éternel de ce repos ; que son opinion était qu'aucune paix ne pouvait être conclue avec Napoléon, et que sur ce principe (que l'expérience de toutes les nations avait consacré, et que le cœur et les lumières de l'Empereur devait reconnaitre aussi) il croyait qu'une déclaration faite à la nation Française, qui séparât ses intérêts de ceux de son tyran, devait mener plus directement au but général de la paix. . . .

"Le Prince Régent trouve de l'intérêt et de la loyauté de tous les souverains de laisser une nation respectable libre de disposer d'elle ; mais il pense qu'il ne serait point inutile de rappeller aux Français l'existence de leur dynastie légitime; qu'en son particulier *il ne pourrait que prendre un vif intérêt aux Bourbons ;* et qu'il était persuadé que l'intérêt politique de l'Empereur et sa conviction intime le disposaient également en leur faveur; mais que dans tous les cas cet intérêt devait être subordonnée au vœu de la nation. Quant à l'accession des Alliés pour une déclaration pareille, le Prince ne revoquait point en doute les principes du Roi de Prusse : l'Autriche serait peut-être plus difficile à convaincre ; mais il s'en rapportait là-dessus à l'Empereur, auquel il coutait si peu d'entrainer par la confiance qu'inspirent sa sagesse et sa loyauté. . . .

"Je me rendis ce matin chez Milord Liverpool. . . . Je le trouvai en effet parfaitement instruit de l'ouverture que le Prince Régent m'avait faite. Il me dit à ce sujet que *son opinion ne pouvait point différer de celle du Prince ;* qu'il reconnaissait parfaitement l'utilité de la mesure projettée ; mais qu'il ne se dissimulait point les difficultés qui pouvaient en entraver l'exécution ; qu'en premier lieu, le Gouvernement Britannique ne pouvait point contracter l'obligation de reconnaître et soutenir publiquement la déclaration des Alliés, puisque l'opinion, étant un pouvoir si despotique en Angleterre, il faudrait que des chances heureuses justifiassent un pareil acte, pour donner au Ministère le pouvoir de le soutenir—que tout dépendrait donc des circonstances ; qu'elles devaient nécessairement aussi déterminer les démarches des Alliés ; mais que si la prudence les empêchait de faire une déclaration aussi officielle, il ne voyait point que rien put s'opposer à ce qu'ils fissent circuler en France des publications partielles tendantes à instruire la nation des projets des Alliés, à lui faire comprendre qu'ils veulent la paix, *qu'ils la feront même avec Napoléon*, si le vœu de la nation conserve à cet homme le Gouvernement de la France ; mais que Alliés ayant appris à leur dépens à se méfier des traités conclus avec

that it seemed scarcely possible for them any longer to act together as a united force. The Russian and Prussian generals even at headquarters openly accused the Austrian Government of treachery to the common cause, their generals of incapacity and pusillanimity. "Where," it was asked, "is this retreat to end? Are we to abandon all our conquests and recross the Rhine merely because a few detached corps have been maltreated?" Blucher became perfectly furious when he heard of the retreat of Schwartzenberg from Troyes; he forthwith wrote on a torn sheet of paper a letter to the Emperor Alexander, declaring his readiness to march direct on Paris and compel Napoleon to give up the pursuit of the Grand Army to defend his capital. He added these important observations: "The retreat of the Grand Army will cause the whole French nation to take up arms, and those of them who have declared for the good cause will suffer. Our victorious armies will lose heart. We shall be obliged to retreat into a country utterly exhausted, where we can expect no supplies, and where the inhabitants, being forced to give up their last morsel, will be reduced to despair. The Emperor of the French will recover from the consternation into which he had been thrown, and will, as before, regain the confidence of the nation. Most heartily do I thank your Majesty for the permission you have given me to resume the offensive; I flatter myself I shall do so with the best hopes of success, if your Majesty will give positive orders to Generals Winzingerode and Bulow to place themselves under my command.[1] Joined to them, I shall march on Paris, fearing

[1] Blucher to Alexander, Feb. 21, 1814; Dan. 104, 105.

lui, ils exigeraient naturellement des garanties et des suretés, qui les missent en mesure de ne le plus craindre, et que par là même une telle paix serait plus difficile d'obtenir; que si la nation, lasse des malheurs que la domination de Napoléon a attirée sur elle, se déciderait à s'y soustraire, et se choisit tel autre chef, les Alliés mettraient toutes les facilités à conclure la paix, et la feraient plus avantageuse pour la France, à raison de ce qu'ils n'auraient plus à se défier de l'ambition de Napoléon; et enfin que si les Français rappellaient leurs anciens Maîtres, il y avait sur-le-champ cessation d'hostilités et paix immédiate."—*Secret Despatch from* COUNT LIEVEN *to* COUNT NESSELRODE, *January* 26, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 268-271.

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neither Napoleon nor his marshals, if they should come forth to meet me."

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93. Council at Bar-sur-Aube. Feb. 25.

Matters had now come to such a pass at the Allied headquarters that the Coalition was on the verge of dissolution, and Napoleon on the point of being again invested with supreme dominion in Europe. But in this crisis the peculiar character of Lord Castlereagh appeared with the brightest lustre, and by its ascendancy in the Allied counsels determined the fate of Europe. Calm in appearance, but decided in thought, uniting the highest graces of demeanour to the greatest wisdom in conduct, he won the assent of the sovereigns who sat at the council-board by the charm of his manner, while he commanded the confidence of their followers by the resolution with which he took the lead, and the decision of the course which he recommended. To Metternich in particular he represented in the strongest manner that he should unite with him and the Emperor Alexander in supporting vigorous measures, for that any hesitation now would not only occasion the immediate loss of all their conquests, but would at once lead to the re-establishment of the tyranny of France over the whole of continental Europe. In consequence of the gravity of affairs, a council of war was held at Bar-sur-Aube on the 25th February, in the house of General Knesebek, who, from illness, could not leave his room. There were present, besides the three sovereigns, Prince Volkonsky, Baron Diebitch, Count Nesselrode, Prince Schwartzenberg, Prince Metternich, Count Radetzky, Prince Hardenberg, and Lord Castlereagh. The proceedings which occurred are well worthy of attention; the destinies of the world hung upon the decision of that council.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 422; Thiers, xvii. 409, 412; Cast. Cor. ix. 289; Lord Castlereagh to Lord Aberdeen, Feb. 25, 1814.

94. Proceedings at it.

Alexander opened the discussion by deprecating any further retreat, and strongly urging that Blucher's army, which had been raised up again by reinforcements, chiefly of Germans from the rear, to 48,000 men, should be joined, agreeably to his wish, by the corps of Winzin-

gerode and Bulow, drawn from that of Bernadotte, which would raise it to nearly 100,000 combatants, and that it should immediately move on Paris. But here a difficulty, apparently insurmountable, presented itself. It was impossible for Blucher to begin active operations unless he were reinforced by these two corps, as he was sure to have Napoleon, with 60,000 men, immediately on his hands, for whom his present army was no sufficient match; but these corps were part of Bernadotte's army, which was still far in the rear,* and he was very discontented at the want of attention exhibited to him by the Allied generals, and beyond measure desirous to avoid personally, or by his army, any share in the subjugation of France.†

* On crossing the Rhine at Cologne, which he did not do till 12th February, Bernadotte issued the following proclamation to the French people, parts of which reveal his secret views for the conciliation of that people, whom he hoped one day to govern:—"Français! j'ai pris les armes par ordre de mon roi pour défendre les droits du peuple Suédois. Après avoir vengé les affronts qu'il avait reçu et concouru à la délivérance de l'Allemagne, j'ai passé le Rhin. Revoyant les bords de ce fleuve où j'ai si souvent et si heureusement combattu pour vous, j'éprouve le besoin de vous faire connaitre ma pensée Votre Gouvernement a constamment essayé de tout avilir, pour avoir le droit de tous méprises; il est tems que le système change. Tous les hommes éclairés formaient des vœux pour la conservation de la France; ils désirent seulement qu'elle ne soit plus le fléau de la terre. Les souverains ne sont pas coalisés pour faire la guerre aux nations, mais pour forcer votre Gouvernement à reconnaitre l'indépendance des Etats; *telles sont leurs intentions, et je suis auprès de vous garant de leur sincerité.* Fils adoptif de Charles XIII., placé par l'election d'un peuple libre sur les marches du trône des grands Gustaves, je ne puis desormais avoir d'autre ambition que celle de travailler à la prosperité de la presqu'île Scandinave. Puis-je en remplissant ce devoir sacré envers ma nouvelle patrie, contribuer *en même tems au bonheur de mes anciens compatriotes.* —Donné à mon quartier-général de Cologne, le 12 Fevrier 1814.—CHARLES JEAN."

† "I beg you, on every account, to make Lord Castlereagh sensible how necessary it is to have some *management* of the Prince Royal, especially in what appears to touch himself. He imagines—and it is not for me to say the contrary, for I sometimes believe the same thing—that the exclusion of Sweden from the preliminary conferences [at Chatillon] has been done for the sole purpose of degrading him in the eyes of Sweden, and perhaps of France; at any rate, of humiliating him, and of weakening the opinion which may exist in the world of his influence in the councils of the Allies. . . . Some explanation on this head may do away much of the feeling, which is, however, deep, and may become bitter. . . . If it is intended to follow up these preliminary conferences by positive negotiations for peace, and that peace is to be made for Sweden without her having any part in it, and by the negotiations of the four principal powers, you may depend upon it that it will not be consented to, and

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The Emperor of Russia, throughout aware of the importance of strengthening Blucher by Winzingerode and Bulow's corps, yet was so apprehensive of irritating Bernadotte still more, that he declared it impossible to detach these corps from the army of the Crown Prince. As this would be fatal to any active operation on the part of the Prussian general, the majority of the council recommended a retreat for the Grand Army. The fortunes of the war hung by a thread: were this resolution persevered in, the French armies in three months would be at Vienna and Berlin.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 414, 415; Lord Ripon to Sir Chas. Stewart, July 6, 1839; Cast. Cor. i. 72.

95. Lord Castlereagh's decision determines the Allies to give Blucher two of Bernadotte's corps. Feb. 25.

Then it was that Lord Castlereagh rose; and what followed must be given in the words of the French historian of this memorable scene: "The bad humour of the new Swede, who would willingly have become again a Frenchman to reign over France, had lately become visible on every occasion when he met with the least contradiction. He was not an object indeed of fear; but nevertheless any disturbance in the Coalition, when its forces were entirely occupied with Napoleon in front, might draw after it grave consequences, and they were seriously apprehended if Bernadotte were deprived of the most considerable part of his army. Alexander, like the rest, was restrained by this apprehension, and declared the thing impossible. Then Lord Castlereagh suddenly rose, *and, acting as a sort of providence which disposed of all,* asked the military officers present if they really regarded the junction of the corps of Winzingerode and Bulow as

that some desperate resolution will be taken, for which we shall all be sorry, because we shall be in the wrong and the Crown Prince in the right. He declares that he will hold Guadaloupe even against England by the form of the treaty. . . . He entered with approbation into Lord Castlereagh's view of excluding every intermediate government between the Bourbons or Buonaparte, though he professed his doubts that this would inevitably be the case if something were not determined speedily one way or other; for he says that Soult, and many other of the military chiefs, are beginning to entertain their own views, and that there is talk among them of dividing France by a sort of federative system among different chiefs."—EDWARD THORNTON, ESQ., *to* SIR CHARLES STEWART, *February* 19, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 277-279.

necessary. They having answered in the affirmative, he at once declared that *he took upon himself the whole responsibility of the proceeding*, and that he would remove all difficulties with the Prince Royal of Sweden. Upon this all objections were hushed, and it was decided that Blucher should be reinforced by the entire corps of Winzingerode and Bulow, and then move forward between the Seine and the Marne, in the way which he might deem most conformable to the general interests."[1] So overjoyed was Alexander at this solution of his difficulties, that he forthwith wrote a note in pencil in the council-room, ordering these generals to place themselves under Blucher's orders, and gave it to his envoy, who instantly returned in the highest spirits to this ardent general. It is not going too far to assert that to the effects of this resolution, and the moral courage of the minister who brought it about, the fall of Napoleon is immediately to be ascribed.[2]*

[1] Thiers, xvii. 414, 415.

[2] Dan. 129.

* Lord Ripon, who was with Lord Castlereagh at that time, though not a member of the council, gives exactly the same account of this memorable conference:—"From Napoleon's central position between the armies of Blucher and Schwartzenberg, he was enabled to fall with his main strength upon each of them separately, and experience had proved that neither of them was able singly to withstand his concentrated efforts. Blucher's army was much inferior in numbers to Schwartzenberg's, and the thing to be done was to reinforce Blucher to such an extent as to insure the success of his movements. But where were the reinforcements to be found? There was nothing immediately at hand but a body of Russians under St Priest, who were on their march to Rheims to join the corps to which they belonged in Blucher's army, and they were manifestly insufficient for the purpose. But there were two other strong corps, one of Prussians under Bulow, and one of Russians under Winzingerode, who were on their march from Flanders, and might be brought forward with decisive effect. They, however, belonged to the army of the Crown Prince of Sweden, who had not at that time crossed the Rhine; they were under his orders, and he was very tenacious of his authority over them; and when it was suggested that the only mode of adequately reinforcing Blucher was by placing these corps at his disposal without a moment's delay, the difficulty of withdrawing them from Bernadotte's command, without a previous and probably tedious discussion with him, was represented by a great authority [Alexander] as *insurmountable*. Lord Castlereagh was present at the council when this matter was discussed; and the moment he understood that, militarily speaking, the proposed plan was indispensable to success, he took his line. He stated that in that case the plan *must* be adopted, and the necessary orders *immediately* given—that England had a right to expect that her allies would not be deterred from a decisive course by any such difficulties as had been urged; and

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96. Lord Castlereagh's measures to pacify Bernadotte.

To reconcile the Crown Prince to this rude though unavoidable invasion of his authority was the next care of Lord Castlereagh, and he did this in the most effectual way. Independent of the sway which he necessarily possessed as the distributor of the subsidies which maintained the Allied armies, and of which the Crown Prince received £100,000 monthly, his personal influence was still greater. He possessed in the highest degree that rare quality which so often gives the lead in arduous affairs,—a clear perception of the inevitable, and a firm determination to accept its responsibilities, and work out its necessities. In addition to this he had at his command a most effectual means, of which he made skilful use, of allaying the jealousy and gratifying the vanity of the Crown Prince. By great exertions, powerfully aided by the loyalty and patriotic spirit of the inhabitants, Lord Castlereagh had succeeded in forming a very considerable army in Hanover and the north of Germany. Twenty-five thousand men had been raised in Hanover, Hesse, and Brunswick alone. Seven thousand English were under Sir Thomas Graham in the Low Countries; the Dutch contingent already amounted to 10,000; and even the distant Danes, whom necessity had compelled to join the Coalition, were expected to furnish 8000 or 9000 men. All these troops were in the pay of England. Thus an army of 50,000 men was at the disposal of Great Britain; and this great force Lord Castlereagh proposed to put under the command of the Crown Prince to supply the chasm occasioned by the abstraction of Winzingerode and Bulow's corps. This offer was accompanied by the flattering observation, that the formation of a powerful army in the

he boldly *took upon himself all the responsibility* of any consequences that might arise as regarded the Crown Prince of Sweden. His advice prevailed; Blucher's army was reinforced in time; the battle of Laon was fought successfully, and no further efforts of Buonaparte could oppose the march of the Allies on Paris, and their triumphant occupation of that city. It is not, then, too much to say that the vigour and energy displayed by Lord Castlereagh in this crisis decided the fate of the campaign."—EARL OF RIPON *to* MARQUESS LONDONDERRY, *July* 6, 1839; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 129, 130.

rear was in conformity with the military advice of the Crown Prince to secure the conquests of the Coalition as they were made, and to leave no strongholds in the hands of the enemy in their rear. In conformity with this plan, the army of Bernadotte, which would by these means be again raised to 80,000 men, was to be intrusted with the reduction of the fortresses still in the enemy's possession in Flanders and the Rhenish provinces. Bernadotte was too happy to close with this compromise, as it relieved him from the necessity, of which he was so apprehensive, of marring his prospects in France by openly taking part in its invasion. He in consequence accepted without objection the proposed arrangement, and acquiesced in the transference of Bulow's and Winzingerode's men to the ranks of Blucher.[1] *

[1] Cast. Cor. ix. 293; Thiers, xvii. 445, 446.

* "I have had a full explanation with Baron Wetterstedt and Count Löwenhjelm, who approve the considerations which have led to the decision regarding the army under the command of the Crown Prince. The object is, at least partially, to return to the Prince Royal's advice—namely, to consolidate more regularly as we proceed the fruits of our victories, and not to pour all our strength prematurely into France. The natural course to effect this is to incorporate all the force now advanced on the Nancy and Chalons line into one powerful army, and to assemble everything in the rear into a great army in the Low Countries, to complete the conquest of the fortresses on the side of Holland, and so to organise itself for active service in the field as to form a rampart upon which the more advanced may retire in case of need. It is the wish of the Allied sovereigns to confide this important command to the Prince Royal, if his Royal Highness will undertake it heartily and cordially, in the spirit of the political views which have been opened to him, and which have already received his Royal Highness's sanction and approbation. Our intentions, with respect to the compensations to be given for the capture or destruction of the enemy's fleet in the Scheldt, have already been declared. . . .

"My wish is that the troops naturally connected with Great Britain should be placed under Sir Thomas Graham, as the corps hitherto connected with Hanover have been under General Walmoden. Including the troops in the north of Germany, to the command of which you will observe the Prince Regent is entitled to nominate, there will be ample means of forming two powerful divisions, in which may be incorporated the Danish corps which Great Britain is to subsidise. The Swedes will then form a third division under their own commander, and the Dutch army will constitute the fourth *corps d'armée*. I shall write to Lord Clancarty to submit the whole arrangement to the favourable consideration of the Prince of Orange, and shall use my good offices to prevail on his Royal Highness to concur in the general wish entertained by the Allied sovereigns at headquarters that the Prince Royal should be invited to charge himself with the command of the whole as generalissimo; and that, with this view, all the troops acting in advance of the Meuse should be placed

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"Our military position," wrote Lord Aberdeen at this time to Lord Castlereagh, "is good; and I trust that a speedy success will be the means of restoring to us all we have lost. On this part of the subject I have never had any serious apprehensions: *the enemy is, in my view, a source of danger much less to be dreaded than disunion among ourselves.* I cannot too often represent to you the real state of the minds of those weak men by whom Europe is governed. The seeming agreement at Langres covered distrust and hate. A little success will cement them again; but if they are to be severely tried in adversity, their dissolution is certain. *Your presence has done much*, and I have no doubt would continue to sustain them in misfortune, but *without it they could not exist.* It is not a bystander who speaks, but one who knows what their real feelings are, and who knows that they are actuated by feelings more than principle. In all events, I am heartily glad that you are in a situation to see and judge for yourself in all things. It will do you no harm to see and know the interior of a Coalition. I trust there is no chance that the endeavours of Buonaparte to disunite us should produce any effect."[1]

97. Division of the Allies, and Lord Castlereagh's efforts to unite them.

[1] Lord Aberdeen to Lord Castlereagh, Chatillon, Feb. 28, 1814, Cast. Cor. ix. 297, 298.

98. Lord Castlereagh urges the Allies to form a new alliance.

No one felt more strongly than Lord Castlereagh the extreme danger which the Coalition ran from these divisions, which were equally liable to be brought to an alarming height by victory or defeat. For if the latter awakened again the strong instinct of self-preservation and the prestige of Napoleon's invincibility, the former threatened to bring the three great Powers directly into collision—Alexander desiring to put Bernadotte as his

under his Royal Highness's orders, as soon as it is ascertained that the Prince Royal accedes to the views of the Allies. . . . With respect to the reception of his minister in the Allied councils at Chatillon, we are all very sincerely disposed to put ourselves into his hands. If, upon reflection, his Royal Highness persists in claiming it, we are of opinion it cannot be refused; but we must decline, in that case, the odium of excluding the other lesser Powers. The alternative then practically is, whether this tentative for peace shall be made by four Powers or by four-and-twenty."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* MR THORNTON, *February* 27, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 293, 294.

military lieutenant on the throne of France, the Prince Regent being inspired with a chivalrous desire to restore his decrowned guest, Louis XVIII., to the throne of his ancestors, and the Emperor of Austria to establish a regency, of which Marie Louise might be the head during the minority of his grandson, the young Napoleon. He felt the greatest anxiety, therefore, to take advantage of the apprehensions and spirit of concord which Napoleon's late successes had produced, to form a lasting alliance between the great Powers, which might oppose a permanent barrier to the ambition of France. In this endeavour he was cordially and generously supported by the Emperor Alexander, who, overjoyed at the decisive support he had received from Lord Castlereagh in the important matter of transferring the two corps from Bernadotte's army to Blucher's, was again restored to even more than his former cordiality with the English minister.* The result was the TREATY OF CHAUMONT, which Lord Castlereagh drew up, and which was signed by the four great Powers on March 1st. It remains a durable monument of his wisdom and foresight, for it led to the overthrow of Napoleon's power, and gave peace and unexampled prosperity to Europe for forty years.[1]

[1] Fain, 301, 302; Thiers, xvii. 416, 417.

By this treaty the four great Powers—viz., Russia,

* "The discussions at Troyes were necessarily painful, and gave to my intercourse with the Emperor [of Russia] a more controversial character than I could have wished; and I had reason to know that he was not a little impatient of the opposition he had met with from me: but this is all gone by, and his Imperial Majesty now encourages me to come to him without form. I see him almost every day, and he receives me with great kindness, and converses with me freely on all subjects. . . I don't know that the negotiation [for an armistice], as it has turned out, has had any effect whatever upon the operations, however it may, from the extraordinary circumstances under which it was brought forward, have tempted the enemy to presume upon the Allies politically; and in ending so, I hope we have so managed as to recover our position of authority, which has restored harmony and confidence amongst ourselves. The Austrian reserves are now arriving daily; and as Winzingerode, Bulow, St Priest, and the Saxons, are all either up or at hand, our military position is essentially improved. I know of no other defect in it than the difficulty of bringing the two armies into more close connection, Buonaparte having the advantage of the central position."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *Chatillon, March* 5, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 312.

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99. Treaty of Chaumont. March 1.

Prussia, Austria, and Great Britain—bound themselves, in the event of France refusing the terms proposed of retiring within her ancient limits, to form an alliance offensive and defensive, for the support of which each was to maintain 150,000 men in the field. As it was known that England could not maintain so large a force of native troops, the difference was to be made up by Continental forces in her pay. To enable the other Powers to maintain forces so considerable, England bound herself to pay annually, during the whole continuance of the war, a subsidy of £5,000,000 sterling, in addition to the payment of her own contingent, to be divided equally between Russia, Prussia, and Austria. If she preferred making good any part of her contingent in money instead of men, she was to pay £20 annually for every foot-soldier, and £30 for every horseman. The trophies of war were to be equally divided, and no peace made by any Power, except of common consent; the treaty was to last for twenty years certain, with power to renew it within that time if the contracting parties deemed it advisable. After peace was concluded, each of the Allies was to furnish a contingent of 60,000 men, including 10,000 horse, to assist any one which might be attacked by France, besides additional troops, if rendered necessary. By this treaty England took her place, as a great military power, on level with the greatest on the Continent. Amazing and decisive was the preponderance in Continental affairs which this alliance gave to her. "She was to contribute," says Thiers, "in men and money, double that furnished by any of the other Powers, triple if her navy were taken into account, which gave her a decisive superiority over any of the other Powers, and rendered it a matter of certainty that any future peace would have no other base but her desires."[1]

[1] Schoell, x. 317; Martens, i. 683; Thiers, xvii. 419.

In addition to those stipulations which composed the public treaty, there were secret articles agreed to, of the

utmost moment for the future distribution of power in Europe, and the preservation of its balance. It was agreed, 1st, That the old Germanic Empire should be restored, but in the form of a federal union, to be governed, so far as its common concerns went, by a Diet, chosen by the Powers composing it, in proportions to be afterwards fixed; 2d, Switzerland was to be independent under the guarantee of the great Powers, Italy divided into independent states, and Spain restored to its ancient sovereigns and limits; 3d, Holland was to be enlarged in territory by the union with Belgium, and to form a monarchy under the house of Orange; 4th, Power was reserved to Spain, Portugal, Sweden, and the Prince of Orange, to accede to this treaty; 5th, "Considering the necessity which might exist, even after the conclusion of a definitive treaty of peace, to keep in the field during a certain time forces adequate to carry into effect the arrangements which the Allied Powers might agree upon for confirming the peace of Europe, the high contracting Powers agree to concert among themselves the requisite provisions, not only regarding the necessity, but the importance and distribution of the forces requisite for this purpose; but under this limitation, that none of the Powers should be obliged to keep such forces for this end on foot more than a year without their express consent." *

100. Secret articles of the treaty.

* Lord Castlereagh gives the following curious account of the circumstances attending the final signature of this memorable treaty:—"I send you my treaty, which I hope you will approve. We four ministers, when signing, *happened to be sitting at a whist-table.* It was agreed *that never were the stakes so high at any former party.* My modesty would have prevented me from offering it; but as they chose to make us a military power, I was determined not to play a second fiddle. The fact is, that upon the face of the treaty this year *our engagement is equivalent to theirs united.* We give 150,000 men, and £5,000,000, equal to as many more — total 300,000. They give 450,000, of which we, however, supply 150,000, leaving their own number 300,000. The fact, however, is that, sick, lame, and lazy, they pay a great number more. On the other hand, *we give to the value of* 125,000 *men beyond the* 300,000. What an extraordinary display of power! This, I trust, will put an end to any doubts as to the claim we have to an opinion on Continental matters."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* MR HAMILTON, *Chaumont, March* 10, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 336.

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This secret treaty, which was the basis on which the whole subsequent arrangements at the Congress of Vienna were formed, was a complete development of the views of Lord Castlereagh, which he had in part inherited from Mr Pitt, for the settlement of the affairs of Europe on such a basis as might serve as a guarantee in future against the encroachments of French ambition.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 353; Schoell, x. 421.

101. Which was a virtual dissolution of the Congress of Chatillon.

The signature of this treaty was a virtual dissolution both of the Congress of Chatillon and the Conferences of Lusigny, because it bound the Allied Powers to demand conditions, as a basis either of armistice or pacification, which were so utterly at variance with any in which Napoleon would concur, that neither a cessation of hostilities nor a peace was practicable till the sword had determined the points in dispute between them. In fact, so determined was Napoleon to agree to no peace which did not secure to him an easy entrance, at any future period, into Holland, Germany, and Italy, that he wrote to Caulaincourt on 19th March, after the Congress had been broken up, directing him to enter into no engagement which should embrace the cession of the fortresses of *Antwerp, Mayence, and Alessandria,* and declaring that even if he (Caulaincourt) had been obliged to agree to such a cession, and he himself had ratified, he would still be regulated by his military situation as to whether he should carry it into execution. When the minds of both parties were thus decisively made up, the continued sitting of the Congress was evidently a vain formality, prolonged for no other reason than from the desire of each to throw upon the other the odium of breaking off negotiations, and gain time for additional preparations. So frivolous and unmeaning, indeed, were the proceedings of the Congress after this time, that they justified the caustic observation of Sir Charles Stewart, that "if they were all sick, their *laquais de place* could do their duties just as well as themselves."[2]* The in-

[2] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, Chatillon, March 8, 1814, Cast. Cor. ix. 323; and Lord Aberdeen to Lord Castlereagh, March 8, 1814, Ibid. 325.

* "It appears to me, as instructions stand, that if we were all sick, our

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structions of the Allied sovereigns to their commissioners were to take every proposal or *contre-projet* of the French plenipotentiary *ad referendum*; which, by necessarily occasioning a delay of several days for each, seemed to afford the means of prolonging the conferences without any result for an indefinite time.

102. Slow progress of the negotiation, and changing instructions to the plenipotentiaries. Feb. 28.

On the 25th February, the day on which the important orders for the dislocation of Bernadotte's army were given, instructions of a more peremptory kind were sent to the Allied plenipotentiaries, enjoining an immediate rupture of the negotiations if the basis proposed by the Allies was not accepted within the time necessary for communicating with the French headquarters.* The re-

*laquais de place* could just as well do our duties here; everything is to be taken *ad referendum*; and in the letter of this day it is rather curiously argued that the delay of twenty-four hours can make no essential difference in the determination that may be taken by France. Now this is entirely in the teeth of all our former doctrines; for inasmuch as we have laid down that the events of the war must necessarily alter our terms, so in justice must France have the same advantage, and a battle gained by Buonaparte during the reference to headquarters might entirely change Caulaincourt's answer. My impression on this is, that you must fix your general ideas better, and give us some more extended discretion, if you mean we should be an efficient Congress for peace or war. If, on the contrary, you like to train on the things left us, we should know your drift. You have certainly so distinctly stated that every rejoinder that comes from the French plenipotentiary should be taken *ad referendum*, that the only possible case where we should be puzzled would be the acceptance of our *projet* by Caulaincourt, and the request from him on our part to sign the preliminaries. Now, though I admit this is very improbable, still it is on the cards by a great defeat of Buonaparte by Blucher, and a sudden order sent here to close on the *projet*. As negotiators, how should we stand if we delayed accepting the terms we have laid down? And still, according to your orders, we must even in such case refer. It is most probable that Caulaincourt will accompany his *projet*, if he comes near our conditions, by a direct proposition for an armistice, yielding very likely to your line of demarcation. He has appeared very much cast down that this has fallen to the ground. As events stand now, twenty-four hours may make the whole difference, and the Allies should not play so very changeable and undefined a game. I am told, if we do nothing here, and all breaks off, the armies and some of their chiefs will be again as clamorous for armistice, to change the theatre of the war, to give repose, &c., as they have been before. It is only the hope of our doing something that has reconciled them to the breaking off of the armistice."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *March* 8, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 322, 323.

* "Vous vous concerterez avec le négociateur Français à l'égard du tems indispensablement nécessaire pour communiquer avec son Gouvernement par la route la plus directe, et vous declarerez là dessus que, si à telle époque une réponse conforme en substance à la base établie dans le projet des Alliés

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solution, however, was afterwards departed from by the Allies, evidently to gain time to see what the junction of Bulow and Winzingerode's corps to the army of Blucher might produce; and at the meeting of the Congress on the 28th February, the 10th March was fixed on as the final period within which the French answer was to be received. Yet even in the event of none coming, the Congress was not to be *ipso facto* dissolved, but that fact to be reported to the Allied headquarters.*

103. Final terms proposed on Feb. 17.

The detailed terms, finally proposed by the Allied sovereigns to the French plenipotentiary on the 17th February, were as follows: France reduced to its old limits as in 1790; the abandonment of the titles of Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, Mediator of Switzerland, and King of Italy; the construction of all the countries adjoining France in an independent form; the organisation of Germany in the form of a federal union; of Italy in independent states, between the Austrian possessions and the French frontier; the independence of Switzerland as a separate republic; the formation of a kingdom in Holland for the Prince of Orange, augmented by Flanders; finally, the restoration of the Peninsular thrones to the houses of Braganza and Bourbon. In return for these demands, the British Government consented to restore the whole French colonies conquered by them during the war, with the exception of the Cape and the islands of Bourbon and the Mauritius in the East, and those of Saintes and Tobago in the West Indies; Malta to remain in the hands of the English, but Sweden and Portugal to restore respectively

n'était point arrivée, la négociation serait regardée comme terminée, et que les plénipotentiaires des Cours Alliées retourneraient au quartier-général."—*Instructions, February* 25, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 323, 324.

* "Dans le cas, peu probable au reste, où le plénipotentiaire Français laisserait écouler la journée du dix sans réponse quelconque, votre Excellence voudra bien dès la matinée du onze lui remettre conjointement avec Messieurs ses collègues une note pour lui annoncer que ce fait a été porté à la connoissance des Cours Alliées."—*Instructions, March* 7, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 324.

Guadaloupe and Cayenne. It is worthy of especial notice, that in these proposals the whole cessions on the Allied side were on the part of Great Britain, which had contended the longest, and been most triumphant in the struggle; and that nothing was demanded from France but the abandonment of her conquests since the Revolution, without the cession of a village in her ancient territory. How different had been the conduct of Napoleon in similar circumstances, when in 1805 he insisted on the cession by Austria of a fourth of her territory, and in 1809 of a fourth of what remained, and in 1806 spoliated Prussia by the seizure of half her territories and the imposition of a war contribution of £24,000,000 sterling, equivalent to at least double the sum in this country![1]

[1] See Project des Alliées, Koch, ii. 236-243; Fain, 327; Bign. xiii. 306; Thiers, xvii. 367.

104. Caulaincourt's answer and counter-project. March 10.

To these proposals, which were put forward by the Allies rather to vindicate their own consistency than from any idea that they would be acceded to by the French Emperor, it was answered by Caulaincourt at the meeting of the Congress on the 10th March—the very last day the Allies would allow him to give in an answer: "The three Powers have declared, only three months ago, at Frankfort, that they wished to establish an equilibrium of power in Europe. They profess the same desire now, and France concurs in that wish. But Europe does not resemble at this time what she was twenty years ago. Then the kingdom of Poland, already partitioned, disappeared entirely; the immense empire of Russia received vast and rich provinces; 6,000,000 of men were added to dominions already more extensive than any in Europe, while 9,000,000 fell to the lot of Austria and Prussia. Soon after, the position of Germany was changed. The ecclesiastical states, and most of the free cities, were divided among the secular princes; Austria and Prussia received the greater part of them. The ancient republic of Venice became a province of Austria; 2,000,000 of subjects, with new territories and new resources, were

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given to Russia by the treaty of Tilsit, by that of Vienna, of Jassy, and of Abo. On her side, during the same period, England has not only acquired the Dutch possessions of Ceylon and Trinidad, but she has doubled her territories in India, and gained an empire there which the greatest monarchies in Europe could hardly equal. If the population of that empire cannot be considered an addition to the inhabitants of Great Britain, she has at least gained by their sovereignty an immense addition of riches, the other great element of power. Russia and England have preserved all that they have acquired; and Austria and Prussia have, it is true, sustained losses, but do they abandon all thoughts of repairing them, or will they now be contented with the possessions they enjoyed before the war? When all has thus changed around France, can it maintain the same relative power if it is reduced to its original limits? Replaced in its original state, it would be far from enjoying the same influence or security when the power of its neighbours has so immensely increased. England can only be attacked by sea; Russia, backed by the pole, and flanked on either side by inaccessible and boundless solitudes, can be invaded, since the acquisition of Finland, only on one side. France, half commercial and half territorial, is open to attack on all sides, both by land and sea, on both of which elements she is brought in contact immediately with valiant nations." [1]

[1] Contre-Projet de Caulaincourt, March 10, 1814; Fain, 335.

105. *Contre-projet* at length presented by Caulaincourt.

The Allied plenipotentiaries, upon receiving at the eleventh hour this professed *contre-projet*, declared that the memoir (for such it was) was no answer to their ultimatum, and that the conference need not any longer be prolonged.* Upon this, Caulaincourt, finding himself

* "*M. de Caulaincourt* reads his observations [given above].

"*Count Stadion.*—Is this your answer to our *projet*? I suppose we are to take it as a refusal.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—It is not a refusal; they are only observations. I request you to examine them.

"*Count Stadion.*—After waiting so long, we expected to have had a precise answer.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—I refuse nothing. You perceive the objects upon

driven to the wall, and the conference on the point of breaking up, drew from his breast a real *contre-projet* of proposals on the part of the French Emperor, which was only announced by him as verbal, and was to this effect: "The French plenipotentiary, on the part of the French Emperor, declares verbally that he is ready to renounce all expressions tending to convey the idea of supremacy, protection, or constitutional influence, in countries beyond the limits of France; to recognise the independence of Spain in its ancient limits, under the sovereignty of Ferdinand VII.; the independence of Italy; the independence of Switzerland under the guarantee of the great Powers; the independence of Holland under the sovereignty of the Prince of Orange; and, to render peace more durable between France and England, he declares his readiness to make cessions beyond sea, such as may be deemed necessary in consideration of a reasonable equivalent." When this *projet* was read, Lord Cathcart asked "what colonies France had to cede?" "*None*," replied M. de Caulaincourt; "but the French colonies you possess are by conquest, not by cession."[1]

[1] Protocol, March 10, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 559-561; Fain, 335.

106. Rejected by the Allies. March 13.

Caulaincourt was well aware that this *contre-projet* could not be considered as satisfactory by the Allies, for it was silent on the fundamental article of the *extent of France*, whether within the ancient limits or as she now stood—that is, extending to the Alps and the Rhine, and so including Antwerp, Mayence, and Chambery. The Allied plenipotentiaries, however, in conformity with their instructions, took the *contre-projet ad referendum;* and, on the 13th a long conference took place regarding it. The Allied plenipotentiaries here met Caulaincourt's verbal

which the observations particularly apply. I request you to consider them. They are not offensive in any manner; they are founded on facts.

"*Count Stadion.*—We must take this as a refusal. . . . Is it your intention to give us an answer—an acceptance or a refusal? . . .

"*Baron Humboldt.*—We have orders to demand an answer. Our conference must break up; we cannot discuss upon nothing. . . .

"*Count Stadion.*—We cannot continue the conference."—*Protocol, March* 10, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 557-559.

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*contre-projet* by a declaration that they considered, in consequence of it, the negotiations broken off by the French Government. Notwithstanding the peremptory tenor of their rejoinder, however, the Congress still continued to sit, and was not finally broken up till the 19th. The anxiety of the French Emperor to prolong the conferences in order to gain time for military successes, was the cause of this otherwise inexplicable delay. The general tenor of the discussion was that the Allies insisted for the ancient limits, and Caulaincourt contended for the Frankfort basis, which undoubtedly recognised the frontiers of the Rhine.* At last, at his earnest request, Caulaincourt got the conference on the 13th adjourned first for twenty-four hours, and, after its expiry, for a longer period, to give the French plenipotentiary time to consult the Emperor.† During the interval, in conformity with Napoleon's final instructions, he drew up a detailed series of proposals, which he gave in writing at a conference on the 15th.[1]

[1] Fain, 389; Thiers, xvii. 505, 506; Protocol, March 10 and 13, 1814, Cast. Cor. ix. 559-568.

107. Final proposals of Napoleon, and rupture of the Congress. March 15.

These were, that France should retain *Antwerp, Flanders, and the frontier of the Rhine,* but withdraw from Westphalia, Holland, Spain, Illyria, and Italy. Holland was to be restored to the Prince of Orange, Spain to Ferdinand VII. The Pope was to return to Rome; Germany to be reconstituted as an independent confederation; Italy also to be independent, but Prince Eugene and the Princess Eliza to have states assigned

* "*Sir C. Stewart.*—Are we to understand from you that you will give no other *contre-projet* than what you call the Frankfort basis?

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—I give you this as a *premier contre-projet.*

"*Count Stadion.*—We reject it entirely—we have our instructions.

"*M. de Caulaincourt.*—If this is the case, I ask that the conference may be adjourned for two hours, or until the evening.

"This was agreed to."—*Protocol, March* 13, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence,* ix. 563.

† "Nous avons l'ordre de déclarer que la négociation est rompue par le Gouvernement Français; que nous exécutons cet ordre en faisant cette déclaration; que nous ne refusons pas au plénipotentiaire Français l'envoi d'un courier à son maître, accompagné d'un officier au quartier-général des souverains Alliés; mais qu'à moins de recevoir des ordres nous ne pouvons agir qu'en conformité de la déclaration ci-dessus."—*Protocol, March* 13, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence,* ix. 566.

them therein. England was to retain Malta, but restore most of her colonies to France. This *contre-projet* was read by Caulaincourt, and taken *ad referendum* by the Allied plenipotentiaries. At the next meeting of the conference, three days afterwards (18th), Count Stadion read a formal answer on the part of the Allies peremptorily rejecting it, and declaring the Congress dissolved.* A final meeting of the plenipotentiaries took place the

* "Europe, allied against the *French Government*, desires only the establishment of a general peace, Continental and maritime. Such a peace can alone give the world the repose of which it stands so much in need; but that peace cannot subsist without a due partition of force among the different Powers. No views of ambition have dictated the proposals on the part of the Allies in the sitting of 17th February last. France, even when restored to her limits of 1792, is still, from her central situation, the riches of her soil, the strength of her frontiers, the number and distribution of her fortified places, on a level with the greatest Power on the Continent. The other Powers, in consenting to their own reconstruction on a proportionate scale, and to the establishment of intermediate independent secondary states, give the best proof of the principles which animate them. England restores to France her colonies, and with them her commerce and marine. She does more: in denuding herself of the many conquests which she has made during so many years, she does not advance any pretension inconsistent with the freedom of the seas, or any right inconsistent with the free enjoyment of commerce by others. Inspired with a spirit of justice and liberality worthy of a great people, England throws into the balance of the Continent acquisitions beyond the sea, of which the possession would secure for her for long the exclusive dominion of it. In making these sacrifices to purchase not a merely nominal but a real equilibrium in Europe, the British Government is entitled to expect that they shall afford her a guarantee that these concessions have not been a pure loss on her part, that they will not be turned against Europe and herself.

"The *contre-projet* of the French plenipotentiary proceeds on entirely different principles. According to it, France will retain a territory more extensive than experience has shown to be consistent with the peace of Europe. She will retain those salient points and offensive positions by the aid of which she has already overturned so many of the adjoining states. The cessions she proposes to make are seeming, not real. The principles still announced by the actual ruler of France, and the dear-bought experience of many years, have proved that adjoining secondary states possessed by members of his family can be independent only in name. Were they to deviate from the principles on which their *projet* rests, the Allied sovereigns would have done nothing for the peace or safety of Europe; the efforts of so many sovereigns, leagued together for one end, would be lost; the weakness of their Cabinets would turn at once against themselves and their subjects. Europe, and France itself, would soon *become the victims of fresh convulsions; Europe would not conclude peace—she would only disarm.* The Allied Courts, therefore, considering the *contre-projets* of France essentially at variance not merely with the details, but with the spirit of the basis proposed by them; regarding further prolongation of the Congress of Chatillon as useless and dangerous—useless, because the proposals of France are at variance with the conditions which the Allies con-

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next day (19th), to receive and record Caulaincourt's reply to the Allied declaration. When this form was complied with, Count Stadion rose and said, in a solemn voice, "We have only now to express our regret that we have not been more successful;" to which M. de Caulaincourt replied, "You cannot doubt how much I regret it also. *Je le sens dans toutes les manières.*" With that they separated, and the most momentous Congress of modern times came to an end.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 506-508; Protocol, March 15, 18, 19, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 562-573.

108. Metternich's letter to Caulaincourt, urging the acceptance of the terms of the Allies.

So great was Metternich's anxiety to get the French plenipotentiary to come to an arrangement, that he repeatedly, during the sitting of the Congress, wrote to Caulaincourt, urging, in the strongest terms, the acceptance of the Allies' proposals, and pointing out, in particular, the great sacrifices England was prepared to make to effect an accommodation.* On the 18th March, the very day before the Congress broke up at Chatillon, he wrote to Caulaincourt in these terms: "The day when peace may be finally concluded, under the necessary sacrifices, has at length arrived. Try to conclude it, but without contending for inadmissible objects. Matters have now come to such a pass that you can no longer write romances without the greatest risk to the Emperor Napoleon. What

sider necessary to the equilibrium of Europe, and to the reconstruction of the social edifice to which they are determined to consecrate the whole forces with which Providence has intrusted them—dangerous, because the prolongation of sterile negotiations would only inspire the people of Europe with vain expectations of peace,—the Allied Powers, therefore, with regret regard the Congress of Chatillon as dissolved: and they cannot separate without declaring that they *make no war on France;* that they regard the *proper dimensions* of that empire as one of the first conditions of a proper balance of power; but they will not lay down their arms until their principles have been recognised and admitted by its Government."—FAIN, 357-361; KOCH, ii. 360-363.

* "I will always hold to you the same language; it should be appreciated by men of sense, who really desire the good of their country. We have but one wish, that of peace; but that peace is impossible if you will not make the necessary sacrifices to regain your possessions beyond the seas. To arrive at that peace it is necessary to be equally prepared for the means by which it is to be obtained, and not to forget that England *disposes alone of all the compensations possible*, and that, in agreeing *to denude herself in favour of France of almost the whole of her conquests*, she is entitled to insist that she shall be replaced *on a level* with the other great Powers on the Continent, and not above them."—METTERNICH *to* CAULAINCOURT, *March* 18, 1814; FAIN, 305, 306.

risks, on the other hand, do the Allies run? None but being obliged to evacuate the territory of old France; and what would that avail the Emperor Napoleon? The whole left bank of the Rhine will speedily be raised against him. Savoy is in arms. Attacks, purely personal, will soon be made on the Emperor, without the possibility of arresting them. I speak to you with sincerity. I am always on the same path. You know my views, my principles, my wishes. The first are entirely European, and therefore not alien to France; the second point to retaining Austria interested in the wellbeing of France; the third are in favour of a dynasty so intimately united to our own. I speak to you, my dear Duke, in the most entire confidence. To put an end to the dangers which menace France, all that is required is for your master to make peace. Matters, if he does not do so, will ere long be beyond his reach. The throne of Louis XIV., with the additions of Louis XV., is too high a stake to put upon a single throw. I will do my utmost to retain Lord Castlereagh for a few days; *the moment he has gone, all hope of peace has vanished.*" Caulaincourt replied on the 20th: "If it depended on me, your hopes would speedily be realised. I should have no doubt they would, if I were sure *that yourself and Lord Castlereagh were to be the instruments of this work, as desirable as it is glorious.*" But it was all in vain. Napoleon would neither recede from his demands nor accede to those of the Allies, and everything was left to the arbitrament of the sword.[1]

[1] Metternich to Caulaincourt, March 18, 1814; Caulaincourt, March 20, 1814; Fain, 311, 313.

It was Napoleon's determination not to relinquish Antwerp, Mayence, and Alessandria, and with them his designs against Great Britain, Germany, and Italy, which was the immediate cause of the rupture of the Congress of Chatillon. Down to the very last he adhered to this resolution. All Caulaincourt's entreaties, and they were many and earnest, could not prevail on him to abandon these great offensive strongholds. Of all three, it was on Antwerp that his affections were most strongly set. So

109. Napoleon's resolution not to abandon Antwerp and Mantua led to the conferences being broken off.

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1814. March 17. determined was he to hold by this important fortress, that on the 17th March, ten days before the Congress of Chatillon broke up, Maret, by his orders, wrote to Caulaincourt from Rheims, urging him to hold by Antwerp and the basis of Frankfort, so far as Italy was concerned.*

March 19. And on the 19th, the day when it was finally dissolved, he wrote to Caulaincourt not only positively forbidding any engagement for the cession of Antwerp, Mayence, and Alessandria, but declaring that, even if he had *entered into such an engagement, and he himself had ratified it*, it would depend on his military position whether or not he would carry it into execution.† Nor were these merely the views of the French Emperor when heated in the conflict, and when a single considerable military success might have entirely changed his political position. They were adhered to by him years afterwards in the solitude of St Helena. "Antwerp," said he there to Las Cases, "was to me a province in itself; it was the principal cause of my exile to St Helena, for it was the required cession of that fortress *which made me refuse the terms offered at Chatillon.* If they would have left it to me, peace would have been concluded."[1]

[1] Las Cas. vii. 43-46, 56, 57.

Although the Congress of Chatillon was brought to this prosperous conclusion, so far as the unanimity of the Allies was concerned, yet it was with the utmost diffi-

* "The abandonment of all their conquests by the English is *a real concession, which his Majesty approves, especially if it can be combined with leaving us Antwerp.* If the negotiation is to be broken off, let it be on the demand for the cession of our strongholds, and the evacuation of our territory. If you are pushed to abandon Antwerp, insist on the restitution of *all* our colonies, including the Isle of France, and the adherence to the basis of Frankfort so far as regards Italy."—MARET *to* CAULAINCOURT, *Rheims, March* 17, 1814; FAIN, 307, 308.

† "L'Empereur desire que vous ne preniez aucune engagement positif à l'égard de tout ce qui concerne la remise des forteresses d'Anvers, de Mayence, et d'Alexandrie, si vous êtes obligé de consentir à leur cession. Son intention étant même dans le cas *où il aurait ratifié le traité de se regler sur les circonstances militaires.* Attendez jusqu'au dernier moment. En un mot S. M. desire se trouver après le traité encore même de pouvoir *tirer parti des circonstances jusqu'au dernier moment.*"—NAPOLÉON *à* CAULAINCOURT, 19 Mars 1814; SCHOELL'S *Recueil*, v. 129.

culty that they were held together, and the causes of division among them were so many and urgent, that by the concurring testimony of all who had the best sources of information as to the secret views of the Allied Courts, had it not been for the mingled firmness and moderation of Lord Castlereagh, the charm of his high-bred and chivalrous manners, and the sway which his decision of character had acquired even over the greatest potentates, the Confederacy would have been broken up, and Napoleon would have emerged victorious out of all his dangers.* The great peril which it required all the firm-

110. Chances in Napoleon's favour, and great importance of Lord Castlereagh's presence.

* "In one's born days there never was such gross mismanagement. When the great headquarters arrived at Troyes, the left of Schwartzenberg's corps was extended beyond Osray and Montereau; a desperate cannonade was heard for two days in the direction of Blucher on the right, but the Grand Army was incapable of marching to his support, having extended so much to the left; and thus, not liking to come back again till they knew there was a great necessity, they remained at Troyes, and extended along the Seine several days, doing nothing. In the mean time, Napoleon with the same troops (the Guards and cavalry from Spain) marched from right to left, and from left to right, and successively squeezed Olsoofief (by the by, he suffocated him in his embrace), Sacken, D'York, Blucher, Wittgenstein, and the Prince Royal of Wirtemberg.

"After all this bitter folly on our part, concentration was determined on, and these conquerors found that they may outmanœuvre themselves, and that simple uncomplicated movements with all your forces together, and in hand, is the way for unlettered generals to succeed. Had our Leipsic plan been persevered in—had each army been together—Blucher, collected, would have retired, and Schwartzenberg would have been on Buonaparte if he had followed him, but we must e'en manœuvre and alarm ourselves, right, left, and centre. Our total loss exceeds, I should think, 35,000 and 60 or 70 pieces of cannon. However, I am not sure but this will in the end be of advantage. I am clear our military position is better now than it has ever been, if turned with judgment to profit. We have suffered perhaps a moral defeat, but in every other respect we are more powerful than ever. The reserves of the Grand Army are all within a few days' march, and they are very numerous; and Blucher, joined by Bulow, Strogonoff, Winzingerode, and Woronzow, will have an army of 100,000 men, on that side alone, stronger than the French.

"With respect to our *marche politique*, at one time Bourbonists, at another grasping at any probability of peace—no fixed system of action at all. *What Castlereagh has achieved is really wonderful; but for him, I believe all would fall.* It might be judicious to keep Caulaincourt a little in play until you entered France, and saw what spirit you could actually rouse. Whatever of bad happens to us we richly deserve, *for whatever is good we must thank Providence and Castlereagh.* As to our work here, Caulaincourt individually wishes and works tooth and nail for peace, so far as depends on him. He dreads Buonaparte's successes even more than ours, lest they should make him more impracticable. Since the turn of affairs Napoleon has taken our disorder. He talks now of

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ness and address of Lord Castlereagh to avert, was that Austria would draw off and conclude a separate pacification with Napoleon, in which case the Russian and Prussian armies, left alone in the heart of the enemy's country, would have been forced to retreat, and surrender the whole objects of the war. Her conduct in the campaign had been so dilatory and backward that it could not be ascribed to timidity or military incapacity, but obviously arose from a desire to avoid pushing matters to extremities, and leaving time to Napoleon to conclude a peace on such terms as might secure the throne of France to himself, or at all events the regency to the Empress Marie-Louise, and the succession to his son. It has been seen that, so late as the 18th March, the very day before the Congress finally broke up, Metternich was strenuously urging Caulaincourt to conclude peace on those terms, which would have left Europe exposed to a renewal, at no distant date, of all the dangers from which they were on the point of escaping. We have Lord Castlereagh's own authority for the assertion, that indecision to a painful degree pervaded the Allied councils at this time; and

successes altering terms. We must go back to the Frankfort basis. He cannot treat until we are out of France, &c."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* EDWARD COOKE, Esq., *Chatillon, February* 28, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 554, 556.

"Caulaincourt came up to me before dinner to-day, and asked if there was any hope of your (Castlereagh's) return. I professed ignorance of your intentions. He said, '*For the love of God, engage him to return. If he were but here*, and would listen to my propositions, so that we might understand one another, *we should speedily conclude the affair*. How is it possible to conclude matters at a public conference? Neither party can easily be brought to declare the last word, but I am confident, if we could discuss the points separately, there would be no material difference.'"—LORD ABERDEEN *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Chatillon, March* 10, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 335.

"*I heartily congratulate the world that you are upon the spot to keep all things well together.*"—LORD CLANCARTY *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Hague, March* 7, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 319.

"How fortunate that *you should be on the spot, to endeavour to keep all the horses of the great waggon at steady work*, notwithstanding the obstacles they had to encounter, and the kicking, curveting, and fibbing propensities of some of them! Your letter to Metternich is an admirable piece, and the answer does honour to his sovereign."—LORD CLANCARTY *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *The Hague, March* 1, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 300.

indeed, considering the great interests Austria had at stake in the issue, adverse to that of the other Powers, the only wonderful thing is how they ever were reconciled. But for Lord Castlereagh's address and authority, and the terror inspired by Napoleon's victories, the prodigy never could have been effected.*

111. Source of divisions regarding Poland, and Alexander's views on it.

In addition to those causes of division among the Allies, arising from the difficulty in the disposal of the throne of France in the event of success, another source of disunion was already felt, and was daily becoming more serious, regarding Poland. The Emperor Alexander's intention was no longer disguised, to incorporate that great country with his already vast dominions. It was evident that such a design could not fail of rousing in the highest degree the jealousy of the other Continental Powers — especially Austria — and widening the coolness already existing between them arising from the French question; but the Czar and his army were both so set upon the acquisition, and their position in regard to it was so commanding, that it was more than doubtful whether it could be prevented. Sir Charles Stewart, who was highly esteemed, and enjoyed the entire confidence of the Czar, has left the following precious account of a conversation he had with him on the subject during the

* "The political question has been miserably prejudiced by opposite extremes of management: at one time too proud to listen to anything; at another, so impatient to be delivered from the presence of the enemy as to make our prolongation at Chatillon almost ludicrous. I hope, however, we have yet more of equanimity in our counsels than a bystander could predicate. You will see, from the instructions sent this night to Count Stadion, that the Allies, without wishing to give to their *démarche* the appearance of seeking a rupture, are decided upon bringing this negotiation to a short issue; and that whatever may be the turn of the war, they are determined to support the cause of Europe, as the only hope of real peace, firmly and perseveringly against Napoleon, till he shall substantially acquiesce in the terms proposed to him. The Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia have determined, in the absence of the Prince Royal, to place Winzingerode, including Woronzow and Strogonoff, together with Bulow, absolutely under Marshal Blucher's orders. He will thus have a very formidable force daily increasing, while this army is also falling back on its reserves. *In fact, we are only inferior in unity of council.*" —LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD ABERDEEN, *Chaumont, February* 25, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 290.

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conferences at Chatillon. "His Imperial Majesty's known condescendence of character, and the marked kindness he invariably showed me, led, on various occasions, to his communicating his observations and sentiments to me. At this period one of the most difficult and interesting points for adjustment at a general peace was, the fate of the Polish nation, and this peace began now to be confidently looked for. In one of my interviews with the Emperor, his Imperial Majesty dwelt at great length on the immense sacrifices of Russia, and, putting these foremost in his statement, he declared how doubly necessary it became him, on the eve of a settlement of Europe, to look to the permanent interests of his own empire. His Imperial Majesty stated that his moral feeling, honour, and every principle of justice and right, called upon him to use all his power to restore such a constitution to Poland as would secure the happiness of so fine and so great a people. The abandonment of seven millions of his subjects, were he to relinquish his Polish provinces in any general arrangement, without a sufficient guarantee to his country for the great utility and advantage of the measure, *would be more than his imperial crown was worth.* But consolidating these provinces with the duchy of Warsaw, under such a king and such a constitutional administration as Russia would name, would be productive of the happiest effects. He went on to observe that his character was well known, and ought to give confidence to Europe. I remarked in reply, that Europe could not insure at all times an Alexander on the throne. To this his Imperial Majesty rejoined, that the Grand Duke Constantine partook entirely his sentiments as well as his two brothers. He was happy also to believe that the proposition he had started, and the mode in which he viewed it, was seen by Austria in the same light; that he had had a long conversation with Prince Metternich a day or two since, in which the whole of his plan was opened, and that the Prince *n'avait rien contre*, or words to that

effect. I was considerably struck at the time with so extraordinary a declaration from his Majesty, and ventured not only to express my surprise, but to assure *him that Prince Metternich had held very different language to me*, and that I never could suppose he would leave to England the task of being the only power which would oppose itself to his Majesty's views, in case they should not meet with general concurrence, when they were of so much more vital interest to Austria and Prussia. His Imperial Majesty *next alluded in rather a menacing manner* to his power of *taking military possession of Poland*, and seemed to be certain of the *facility with which he could obtain his end*, and I doubted much, from the firm and positive manner in which he expressed himself, whether he would ever be diverted from the purpose he now declared."[1] So strongly were the Emperor's views expressed on this subject that they awakened in Sir Charles the most anxious apprehension as to the extent to which the liberties of Europe might one day be menaced by this great and growing power; and his words, in a confidential letter to Lord Castlereagh at this time, are not a little remarkable, both as an instance of far-seeing sagacity as to future events now only in the course of accomplishment, and as a proof how minds of an elevated calibre can withstand all the influences of private kindness and imperial favours.*

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, March 7, 1814, MS.

* "If we consider the power of Russia, unassailable as she is in front and rear, with an immense front, mistress of the Caspian, the Euxine, and the Baltic, with forty (now seventy) millions of brave, hardy, docile, enthusiastic, and submissive inhabitants, with immense armies highly disciplined, excellently appointed; her innumerable hordes of desolating cavalry, her adoption of the French maxims in war of making the countries where her armies march, feed and maintain them, what may we not fear from her? When we consider further those forces, flushed with success, and disposed to consider treaties and engagements with her as waste paper, if they stood in the way of any projects of aggrandisement; if we further consider her determination to surmount every barrier which engagements have interposed in order to advance herself into the heart of Germany, to supplant on the one side the ancient dominion of Prussia, on the other to turn the northern flank of Austria on the Vistula, as she has turned the southern on the Danube, and demanding, as it were, *by the*

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112. Difficulties in Italy.

A difficulty of another kind, but which proved hardly less serious in the end, arose at this time in Italy, springing, like the others, from the successes of the Allies, which it required all the prudence and forbearance of Castlereagh to adjust, and which led to no small embarrassment in future times. This arose partly from the vacillating conduct of Murat, who, although he had joined the Allies and abandoned his benefactor, was hesitating before he openly united his forces to theirs, and was awaiting the issue of events in Champagne before he took the irrevocable step. It required no little management on Lord Castlereagh's part to keep the Allied Powers and the Neapolitan monarch together in these trying circumstances; but he contrived to effect it, and thereby did

*fortresses of Thorn and Cracow, the keys of Berlin and Vienna;* when we further reflect on the natural march of empires from north to south, from the regions of frost and snow and famine to the climates of warmth, verdure, and fertility, and recollect the revolutions that have taken place in Europe, Asia, and Africa, from the desolating invasions of the northern hordes, what may we not fear and expect?

"When, in addition to these circumstances, we further reflect upon the successive aggrandisements and incorporations of Russia during the last hundred and fifty years, the numerous Tartar tribes that are embraced within her military system, the provinces she has successively added to her empire from Persia, the Porte, Sweden, and Poland; that her whole system of government is a military despotism, and nothing known or regarded in it but military subjection on the one hand, and military property, military rank, and military honour on the other, what may not be the result? If we consider all these circumstances in all their bearings and dependencies, is there a serious and reasonable man in Europe that must not admit that the whole system of European politics ought, in its leading principle and feature, to maintain as an axiom the necessity of setting bounds to this formidable and encroaching power? Weighed against this superior and imperative duty—a duty urged by all the motives of self-preservation—every minor and secondary consideration resulting, whether from ancient rights or claims from family feelings and alliances, from views of future combination and power, ought to be postponed and disregarded. There is no other moral or physical safeguard against the stupendous greatness with which the Continent may ere long be menaced and overwhelmed, than in the personal character of the reigning Emperor, a mixture of benevolence and rectitude, a high sense of religion, and a generous view of all subjects. This affords, in my mind, the only and best guarantee against the far too formidable legions which have recently defiled over the Rhine; but how soon may that guarantee be lost!"—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *February* 14, 1814, *MS.;* and LOND., 255, 256. A remarkable instance of political wisdom and foresight; the more so that it came from a young officer, the fellow-soldier of the Czar, and then basking in the brightest sunshine of his imperial favour.

the greatest service to the common cause, by retaining Eugene's army to watch him in Italy. His instructions to Lord William Bentinck, the commander of the British forces in the Mediterranean, were quite explicit to acknowledge Murat on the throne of Naples, and stand by the Austrian treaty with him, provided he exerted himself honourably in the war; and an indemnity of some sort was provided for the legitimate King of Naples.* Murat, however, although he had little hesitation in betraying his benefactor, had considerable hesitation in imperilling his own throne; and on various pretexts he evaded finally declaring himself, till the capture of Paris left him no alternative but unqualified submission.

113. Difficulties about Genoa, from Lord Wm. Bentinck's proclamation.

Another matter connected with Italy, though less momentous in the outset, became still more serious in the end, and gave no small disquietude to Lord Castlereagh and the whole British Government—an expedition from Sicily to the north of Italy, to co-operate with the Austrians, and, it was hoped, Murat, in driving the French entirely out of the peninsula: the command of it was given to Lord William Bentinck, who was entitled to demand it, being the commander-in-chief in Sicily. It was directed against Leghorn in the first instance, as Murat had taken umbrage at an ill-timed proclamation of the hereditary prince of Sicily claiming the crown of Naples. It after-

* "The point now of importance is to secure the effective and active support of the Neapolitans, whose active assistance appears indispensable to give the Allies that rapid and commanding success which may speedily decide the fate of Italy. I am sorry to find that Murat has, under some pretext, delayed the signature of the treaty in its amended form, and that he still continues to show some *ménagement* towards the enemy. The British Government never liked the Austrian treaty, but being entered into, they are quite willing to act up to its spirit, and to acknowledge Murat upon a peace, on two conditions: 1st, That he exerts himself honourably in the war; 2d, That a reasonable indemnity (it cannot be an equivalent) is found for the King of Sicily. I should hope, with this basis to work upon, you may not only quiet any alarm Murat may have felt as to the nature of our armistice, but furnish him with two very powerful incentives to come forward effectually. In doing so he will facilitate all his own views, and by assisting in the indemnities to the King of Sicily, he may secure his own title to Naples."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK, *Chatillon, February* 21, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 285.

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wards went on to Genoa, both as that was a very important maritime fortress, which it was an object to wrest from France, and as it afforded the best possible base for the British operations in the north of Italy. Upon arriving there, with a force of 7000 men, Lord William experienced no very formidable resistance, and the place was surrendered after the external forts had been stormed. But he very soon found that, though not disposed to risk their fortunes by joining a sinking cause, the Genoese people were animated almost universally with that passion for *separate* sovereignty which has so long been felt in Italy, and is the main obstacle to any *united* action, or the establishment of *general* independence.* Seeing that this was the general disposition, and yielding to the natural opinion, that the best way to reconcile the minds of men to a change of dynasty, and a general restoration, was to proclaim a return in every instance to the old authorities and form of government, Lord William issued a proclamation, without any authority from his superiors, promising such a restoration in unguarded terms.† This proclamation was received with unbounded transports in Genoa, the inhabitants of which yielded for a while to the pleasing illusion of a restoration of their ancient Doges, senate, and provincial independence and grandeur. But it proved not a little embarrassing to the Allied sovereigns, and especially the British Government, who had other views as to Genoa and the distribution of power

* "I am under the necessity of forming here a provisional government, which I shall do as soon as I can ascertain the persons who may be most acceptable to the people. I find that all desire their former independence and ancient form of government, with some modifications. *All are equally desirous of not being annexed to Piedmont.*"—LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Genoa, April* 23, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 491.

† "Considering that the general wish of the Genoese is to return to their ancient form of government, I declare, 1. That the constitution of the Genoese States, such as it existed in 1797, with some modifications which the general wish, the public good, and the spirit of the original constitution of 1797, seem to require, is re-established."—LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK'S *Proclamation, April* 21, 1811; *Parl. Deb.* xxx. 393, 394. This proclamation was at variance with Lord William's instructions, which were to do nothing that might fetter the hands of the Allies in the final disposal of the Genoese territories.—*Ibid.*

in Italy, as they thought, with reason, that to leave France surrounded by *little* monarchies and republics was just to invite the spoiler again to make inroads upon them, and that in the amalgamation of the lesser states was to be found the only security for their independence. Lord Castlereagh, accordingly, pronounced himself strongly against this unauthorised proceeding of Lord William Bentinck, and the proclamation was disavowed by the Allied Governments. But the effect of it remained, and the disappointed feelings of the Genoese vented themselves in loud complaints, which met with the readier reception in Europe that they appealed directly to the generous and patriotic affections.*

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114. Lord Castlereagh's policy as to the Duke d'Angoulême with Wellington. Feb. 25.

Another matter of not less importance came under Lord Castlereagh's notice at the same time, which was the conduct to be pursued, in regard to the Bourbons, by the Duke of Wellington in the south of France. It had become necessary to take a decided line here, because the Duc d'Augoulême suddenly arrived at the head-quarters of the English general in Béarn, in the end of February, at the same time that the Count d'Artois made his appearance at the Allied headquarters in Champagne. The course which Wellington pursued in this

* "I hope, from the course the Viceroy is pursuing, that Italy will wind up well. He is the best of the Buonaparte school, and has played an honourable and able part. If Buonaparte had been enabled to have maintained himself in the field in France, between Murat's rascality, Bellegarde's timidity, and Lord William Bentinck's *impracticability and Whiggism, which seem to follow him everywhere*, we should have been in danger of a serious disappointment in that quarter. As it is, we are masters, I hope, of the question now, in a military sense, and must weigh well the political complications, which are not merely personal to the sovereign claimants, but mixed up with a great deal of internal and extensive jealousy amongst the most of the Italian population." —LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *April* 27, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 520.

"Murat is another sinner—whether to the extent that we can take notice of, I am not yet prepared to say; but the Viceroy has given some strong evidence against him. The events in France have secured us there. If the war had continued on this side of the Alps, Italy would soon have become a dangerous card, which was in itself a new source of alarm, intrigue, and weakness. As it is, we are escaping fast, I hope, from the military difficulty, whatever may be the embarrassment of the political combination." — LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD BATHURST, *April* 27, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 512.

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delicate matter was precisely analogous to what Lord Castlereagh had recommended to the British Cabinet in regard to the negotiations at Chatillon—viz., to abstain from anything like forcing or even attempting to lead public opinion in France, and to avoid committing themselves in favour of the ancient family while still negotiating with the military Emperor at Chatillon. Wellington accordingly would only receive the royal prince *incognito*, though in that character he showed him the most delicate attention, and would not permit him to leave St Jean de Luz to accompany the army in active operation. This conduct met with Lord Castlereagh's decided approval; indeed, the letter Wellington wrote to Lord Bathurst* on the occasion was almost identical with those which the great diplomatist was at the same time addressing to the Cabinet from Chatillon. Lord Castlereagh's views on this subject were perfectly fixed and consistent from the outset. He was decidedly of opinion that the "ancient race and the ancient territory" afforded the best, perhaps the only, security likely to be permanent for the preservation of the peace of Europe. But for the permanence of that very object it was indispensable that the choice

* "The people here all agree in one opinion—viz., that the sentiment throughout France is the same as I have found it here—an earnest desire to get rid of Buonaparte and his government, from a conviction that as long as he governs they will have no peace. The language common to all is, that although the grievous hardships and oppression under which they labour are intolerable, they dare not have the satisfaction even of complaining; that, on the contrary, they are obliged to pretend to rejoice, and that they are only allowed in secret and silence to lament their hard fate. They say that the Bourbons are as unknown in France as the princes of any other sovereign house in Europe. I am convinced more than ever that Napoleon's power stands upon corruption, and that he has no adherents in France but the principal officers of his army and the *employés civiles* of his government, with some of the new proprietors. Notwithstanding this, I recommend your Lordship to make peace with him, if you can acquire all the objects you have a right to expect. All the powers require peace, even more than France, and it would not do to found a new system of war upon the speculations of any individual on what he sees and hears in a corner of France. If Buonaparte becomes moderate, he is probably as good a sovereign as we can desire in France; if he does not, we shall probably have another war in a few years."—WELLINGTON *to* LORD BATHURST, *November* 21, 1813; GURWOOD, xii. 304, 305.

should be *a voluntary one on the part of the French people;* for if it had either the reality or the appearance of constraint, it was not likely to be permanent, and the whole existing evils would be renewed. His whole correspondence and speeches, from first to last, demonstrated that this was his fixed opinion.*

115. Prince of Orange's imprudent and premature attempt in Flanders.

An incident not as yet noticed in history occurred during the sitting of the Congress of Chatillon, which demonstrated how well founded was the caution of Lord Castlereagh in this respect, and what disastrous results were likely to result from any premature attempts to direct public opinion in the conquered provinces as to the choice of their sovereign. It has been already mentioned that it was part of the plan of the Allied sovereigns to adopt Lord Castlereagh's plan of uniting Belgium to Holland, in order to form a respectable state capable of maintaining, with the aid of England and Prussia, its ground against its formidable neighbour. The Prince of Orange, as a matter of course, was acquainted with this arrangement, and he professed, as well he might, the greatest gratitude to the English minister for his support on the occasion. But being impatient to take possession and enjoy the fruits of the promised dominion, he seriously endangered it. Instead of calmly awaiting, according to Lord Castlereagh's advice, the time when "events might declare themselves," and when the incorporation of Belgium and Flanders, announced as the resolution of the Allied sovereigns, might be submitted to without a murmur as the decree of fate, he endeavoured prematurely to obtain a declaration from Flanders in his

* "Every pacification would be incomplete, if you did not re-establish on the throne of France the ancient family; any peace with the man who had put himself at the head of the French nation could have no other final result but to give to Europe fresh subjects of division and alarm; it could be neither secure nor durable. Nevertheless it was impossible to refuse negotiating with him when invested with power, without doing violence to the opinion of Europe, and incurring the whole responsibility of the continuance of the war." —LORD CASTLEREAGH'S *Speech in Parliament, June* 29, 1814; *Parl. Deb.*, xxviii. 458.

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favour. The consequences were just the reverse of what he expected. The ancient division of the Flemings and Dutch founded on difference of religion, political circumstances, and bloody wars, broke out afresh, and in so unmistakable a manner as suggested grave doubts as to the practicability of effecting the union.* Lord Castlereagh strongly represented, both to the Prince and Lord Clancarty, the British minister at his court, the extreme danger of such premature attempts, and he had the good sense to acquiesce in the advice. The obnoxious attempts were in consequence withdrawn, and the union with Holland was ultimately effected without open opposition, though not without secret heart-burnings, which gave rise to important changes in future times.†

116. General bearings of the negotiation at Chatillon.

It is evident, from the detail which has now been given, that the Congress of Chatillon, the most momentous of modern times, was not broken up from any matters of form, or any variance between the Powers engaged as to the lesser points in controversy. It failed because the

* "I beg to call your Lordship's attention to a subject which I mentioned on a former occasion—I allude to the measures adopted by the Dutch Government to prepare the minds of the people of the Netherlands for the expected incorporation of their country with Holland. It would be difficult to give an adequate idea of the mischief which has already proceeded from their intemperate and ill-judged proceedings; and I fear that, if they are persevered in, they will lead to very serious evils. The great majority of the nobility, who, if the fate of their country were *irrevocably* fixed, would probably not be unwilling to worship the rising sun, have been provoked by these premature discussions to make declarations very unfavourable to the Prince of Orange; and as they are a high-spirited people, it is not unlikely they will continue their hostility to the Prince, merely to show their consistency to principles so publicly avowed."—LORD CLANCARTY *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *The Hague, March* 1, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 306.

† "I dined yesterday with the Prince. Before dinner he took me aside, and again repeated all the professions he had made the day before, adding that, if he had been before impressed with the impolicy of his proceedings in the Pays Bas, he was now most fully convinced that the efforts he had made, through his agents, for the purpose of obtaining a cry and *soulèvement* in his favour, were improper; that he was fully impressed with the necessity of waiting the result of your exertions in his favour, with the promptness and magnitude of which he expressed the most entire satisfaction, and to you personally great obligations."—LORD CLANCARTY *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *The Hague, February* 12, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 260.

views of the parties were irreconcilable on vital matters; it broke up on the eternal question between France and Europe. The frontier of the Rhine and the Alps, with Antwerp, Mayence, and Chambery, was the insurmountable difficulty; but for it peace would have been concluded between Lord Castlereagh and Caulaincourt in half an hour. Napoleon risked all rather than abandon them, because he felt that if he held them he could at any time renew his projects of conquest against Great Britain, Germany, and Italy. He knew better than any man that his throne was founded entirely on the *prestige* of military success; that conquest to him was the condition of existence. To retire within the ancient limits of France —to restrict himself to the crown of Louis XIV., was to abandon the whole new-born triumphs of the Revolution, and seemed to him equivalent to abdicating the throne, with this additional circumstance of humiliation, that he would probably be hurled down from it by his own subjects.



117. Seeming justice of Napoleon's pleas at the Congress.

In calmly contemplating, after the lapse of half a century, the merits of this great question, still seriously at issue between France and Europe, it is impossible to deny that there was great plausibility, and, as the facts then stood, seeming justice, in M. de Caulaincourt's arguments in favour of Napoleon's side of the question, that the other great Powers of Europe had been materially aggrandised since the commencement of the struggle in 1792. Russia had gained Finland and a large part of Poland, besides extensive territories on the Danube; England had conquered the Mysore and the Mahrattas, and become lord paramount in Hindostan; and, though Austria had suffered severely in the contest, yet in the line of the Mincio, offered her by Napoleon, and the restoration of the Tyrol, she was more than indemnified for all her losses. To restrict France, therefore, in the midst of this general aggrandisement of the neighbouring Powers, to her ancient limits, was not to restore the balance of

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power, but to destroy it, and destroy it in the most fatal of all ways, by greatly aggrandising the great northern colossus. Such a result was not less at variance with the basis put forward by the Allies themselves in the proposals of Frankfort, than hazardous to the general peace and independence of Europe, which they professed to have so much at heart.

118. Time has proved that Lord Castlereagh was right in the question.

It is impossible to deny that these considerations, as they were stated at the time, appear to be well founded; but time has now proved that they were erroneous, and that Lord Castlereagh had correctly scanned the elements of future repose and balance of power in Europe, when he insisted for the restrictions of France to her ancient limits as the basis of any lasting pacification. The proof of this is decisive. France, by the treaties of 1814 and 1815, *was reduced* to her ancient limits, her resources were seriously impaired by a war-contribution of fifty millions sterling levied on her by the Allies, and an occupation, during three years, of a large part of her territory; her moral prestige and political influence were sensibly weakened by the double capture of her capital, and her military strength seriously impaired by the occupation of Algeria requiring the presence beyond seas of a fifth, at an average, of her embodied troops. Since that time, too, England has made great acquisitions in India, and Russia both in Europe and Asia. Yet all this notwithstanding, France has since shown herself more powerful than any other civilised state, and become again formidable to the liberties of Europe. Aided by England, she has defeated Russia in the Crimea, singly she has conquered Austria in Lombardy. She has succeeded, in the face of the Allied Powers, in annexing Savoy and Nice, and thereby becoming master of the keys of Italy. She has only been prevented by the wise union of Austria and Prussia, and the gallant front shown by the British Volunteers, from resuming the frontier of the Rhine, and with it the Great Napoleon's projects of aggrandisement in Europe.

All this has been done *when starting from the limits of* 1790, and labouring under such serious subsequent difficulties; what, then, would it have been if she had started from the base of Antwerp, Alessandria, Mayence, and the Rhine, and instead of having incurred subsequent humiliation, she had closed the war with the lustre of having repulsed Europe in arms from her gates? Beyond all question, the peace would not have lasted five years, and the costly armed neutrality of 1860 would have begun in 1820. The peace of Europe has been often broken, and still more frequently endangered, during the last forty years, by France, defeated as she had been in the great war; it has never yet been either threatened or broken by any of the Allied Powers, at least against her, though they had been victorious in the strife. These considerations prove that such are the advantages which France derives from her central situation, compact territory, great population, extent of sea-coast, increasing wealth, and the military spirit and talents of her inhabitants, that not only was it indispensable in 1814 to reduce her to her ancient limits, but the same object must be pursued in after-times, and that it is in the formation of a defensive league by the other Powers, and a return to Lord Castlereagh's policy, that the only lasting security for the peace or independence of Europe is to be found.

# CHAPTER XIII.

## SIR CHARLES STEWART AND LORD CASTLEREAGH, FROM THE BREAKING UP OF THE CONGRESS OF CHATILLON TO THE PEACE OF PARIS IN MAY 1814.

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1. Separation of Lord Castlereagh and Sir Chas. Stewart after the breaking up of the Congress of Chatillon.

UPON the dissolution of the Congress of Chatillon Lord Castlereagh returned to Dijon, where the Emperor of Austria and the diplomatic body were assembled, and where his presence was urgently required to keep the Austrians steady to the Alliance; and Sir Charles Stewart with joyful steps moved towards the headquarters of Prince Schwartzenberg. With him he remained till after the taking of Paris, and bore a part in the important actions which immediately preceded that event. It is fortunate that for these, the last and most decisive events of the war, we have the aid of his graphic pen describing what he himself had seen, and that his personal narrative becomes the story of the fall of the French Empire.

2. Previous movements of Napoleon and the Allies.

To understand these, however, and appreciate the vital importance of the events which followed, ending in the fall of Napoleon, it is indispensable to revert to the military operations, and give a brief abstract of what had occurred during the latter weeks of the sitting of the Congress of Chatillon. While the French Emperor was engaged in his brilliant operations against the Grand Army, which terminated in the victory of Montereau, a new and formidable enemy had appeared on the field, who had assailed France in a quarter where attack had never been anticipated, and who came ere long to exer-

cise a decisive influence on the fate of the campaign. This was formed of the corps of Winzingerode and Bulow, 50,000 strong, forming part of Bernadotte's army, which that prince, as the siege of Antwerp had been converted into a blockade, had been reluctantly obliged to allow to move forward into France. They took the road by Avesnes to Laon, which town they occupied without resistance; thus forming an important rearguard and support to Blucher, who was in advance towards Paris, but still under the orders of Bernadotte, whose temporising policy had already rendered him suspected by the whole Allied armies. Bulow occupied Laon, Winzingerode pushed on to Rheims. The advanced-guard of the latter, on the 13th February, under the enterprising and active Chernicheff, made itself master of Soissons, an ill-fortified town on the road from Laon to Paris, and a strategic point of much importance, as commanding the only bridge in that quarter over the river Aisne, which lazily flows in a deep and impassable bed between the two cities. So sensible was Napoleon of the value of this strategic point, that he had thrown an old and determined officer, General Rusca, into it with 18 guns and 4000 men. So ably, however, were Chernicheff's measures taken, that he succeeded in carrying it with very little loss, and making the whole garrison prisoners during the confusion occasioned by Rusca's death, who was killed on the rampart by a cannon-ball. Chernicheff, however, was not strong enough to maintain his important conquest; and he was obliged to march next day towards Rheims to rejoin Winzingerode, taking with him the captured guns and prisoners. Here the latter was in a position to reinforce Blucher, who, at Chalons, was actively engaged in reorganising and concentrating his army, which had lost nearly half its numerical strength in its late disastrous conflicts, and preparing to march to Schwartzenberg's assistance.[1]

Feb. 10. Feb. 11. Feb. 13.

[1] Lond. 282; Burgh. 148, 149; Dan. 127-129; Koch, i. 277, 278; Vaud. ii. 24-27; Thiers. xvii. 358, 359.

Meanwhile Napoleon was pursuing the career of suc-

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3. Continued retreat of the Allied Grand Army.

cess, so brilliantly commenced at Montereau, against the Grand Army under Schwartzenberg. Everywhere the Allied troops retired before him. On the second day after that conflict, having concentrated the mass of his forces, he ascended the course of the Seine to Bray and Nogent; and Schwartzenberg retired towards Troyes, where—Blucher having been ordered up in all haste from Chalons—the whole Allied armies were ordered to assemble on the 21st. A hundred and fifty thousand men appeared at the rendezvous. Blucher, notwithstanding his losses, came up with 50,000 men and 300 guns on the field. The ground, however, was deemed unfavourable for a general battle; and in the night Troyes was abandoned, and the retreat was continued in great confusion to Chaumont. It was during this retrograde movement that the proposal for an armistice was made by the Allied sovereigns, mentioned in the preceding chapter. As these pacific overtures took place after a splendid series of successes on the part of Napoleon, and when the Allied armies were fully concentrated in strength double his own, it is not surprising that Napoleon was much elated, and, deeming the tide of success decisively turned, should have despatched orders to Caulaincourt at Chatillon to sign nothing, but await the issue of military events. At the same time he despatched an angry and characteristic letter to Augereau, at Lyons, who had been unsuccessful, strongly descriptive of the exaggerated expectations he had formed in regard to the possible, and by him expected, achievements of his troops.* The Emperor of

Feb. 21.

Feb. 22.

* "Le ministre de la guerre m'a mis sous les yeux la lettre que vous lui avez écrite le 16. Cette lettre m'a vivement peiné. Quoi! six heures après avoir reçu les premières troupes venant d'Espagne, vous n'étiez pas déjà en campagne! six heures de repos leur suffisaient. J'ai remporté le combat de Nangis avec la brigade de dragons venant d'Espagne, qui de Bayonne n'avait pas encore débridé. Les six bataillons de Nîmes manquent, dites-vous, d'habillement et d'équipement, et sont sans instruction! Quelle pauvre raison me donnez-vous là, Augereau! J'ai détruit 80,000 ennemis avec des bataillons composés de conscrits n'ayant pas de gibernes et étant à peine habillés. Les cardes nationales, dites-vous, sont pitoyables. J'en ai ici 4000 venant d'Angers

Russia, as well as Lord Castlereagh, was extremely averse to the armistice, insomuch that he sent instructions to Winzingerode not to suspend hostilities but under an order signed by himself. Napoleon, though highly elated with the proposal, was equally averse to a cessation of active operations, and refused to agree to any suspension of hostilities while the discussion of the terms of the armistice was going forward. Thus, though a temporary lull of hostilities took place during the discussion of the terms of the armistice between Napoleon and the Grand Army, yet it never extended to the flanks, or embraced the Army of Silesia and the French corps of Marmont and Mortier, which was opposed to them.[1]

[1] Dan. 201; Fain, 141, 142; Valentine, ii. 131; Thiers, xvii. 374-376; Plotho, iii. 265-269.

4. Movements of the Army of Silesia. Feb. 22.

The operations of the Army of Silesia had now become very threatening; for that gallant host, which had been reduced from 60,000 to 32,000 by its recent disasters, had again been raised to 48,000 by the arrival of the corps of St Priest, which had come up from Coblentz on the Rhine; and, taking advantage of the absence of Napoleon, in pursuance of his attack on the Grand Army, Blucher had recommenced active operations now on his own account, having once more separated from the Grand Army. Napoleon's plan, when he advanced up the left

et de Bretagne en chapeaux ronds, sans gibernes, mais ayant de bons fusils: j'en ai tiré bon parti. Il n'y a pas d'argent, continuez-vous. Et d'où espérez-vous tirer de l'argent? Vous ne pourrez en avoir que quand nous aurons arraché nos recettes des mains de l'ennemi. Vous manquez d'attelages: prenez-en partout. Vous n'avez pas de magasins: ceci est par trop ridicule! Je vous ordonne de partir douze heures après la réception de la présente lettre pour vous mettre en campagne. Si vous êtes toujours l'Augereau de Castiglione, gardez le commandement; si vos soixante ans pèsent sur vous, quittez-le, et remettez-le au plus ancien de vos officiers généraux. La patrie est menacée et en danger; elle ne peut être sauvée que par l'audace et la bonne volonté, et non par de vaines temporisations. Vous devez avoir un noyau de plus de 6000 hommes de troupes d'élite; je n'en ai pas tant, et j'ai pourtant détruit trois armées, fait 40,000 prisonniers, pris 200 pièces de canon, et sauvé trois fois la capitale. L'ennemi fuit de tous côtés sur Troyes. Soyez le premier aux balles. Il n'est plus question d'agir comme dans les derniers temps, mais il faut reprendre ses bottes et sa résolution de 93. Quand les Français verront votre panache aux avant-postes, et qu'ils vous verront vous exposer le premier aux coups de fusil, vous en ferez ce que vous voudrez."—NAPOLEON à AUGEREAU, 21 *Février* 1814; THIERS, xvii. 360, 361.

CHAP. XIII. 1814. bank of the Seine from Montereau, had been to have crossed that river at Mery, above its junction with the Aube, and ascend its right bank to Troyes, thus interposing between Blucher and Schwartzenberg, and preventing their junction. But the rapidity of Blucher's march prevented the execution of this design, for on arriving at Mery he found Blucher already on the right bank prepared to dispute the passage. He, therefore, renounced that enterprise, and continued, as already mentioned, his march on Troyes. But no sooner did Blucher find that the French Emperor had gone in pursuit of the Grand Army, than, separating from Schwartzenberg, he resumed his design of a direct advance on the capital by the valley of the Marne, which he considered himself fully able to undertake, as he was to be reinforced by Bulow and Winzingerode. Setting out at once, he reached La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, on the Marne, without difficulty, and was advancing in the direction of Meaux, driving Mortier and Marmont before him, when in the night he received intelligence that Napoleon in person, having discontinued the pursuit of the Grand Army, was advancing by Sezanne directly upon his line of communication. The Prussian general immediately retreated across the Marne at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, breaking down the bridge behind him, and taking the road to Soissons, where he expected to effect a junction with Bulow and Winzingerode, now happily put under his orders by the joint efforts of the Emperor Alexander and Lord Castlereagh. Thus both armies were effectually checked by Napoleon, and he had the satisfaction of seeing that, with the 70,000 men in a central position which he commanded, he was able to stop the advance alternately of an army of 100,000 and another of 50,000 men.[1]

Feb. 25.

[1] Thiers, xvii. 377-379; Dan. 201, 202; Koch, i. 358-360; Plotho, iii. 265-270.

The departure of Napoleon to make head against Blucher was the signal as usual for the recommencement of offensive operations by Schwartzenberg, who had now closed up his reserves, and was at the head of 120,000

men. They began with an attack by Wittgenstein and Wrede—who commanded the vanguard, 35,000 strong—on Oudinot, who, having crossed the Aube at Bar-sur-Aube, was opposed to them with 18,000. The French, notwithstanding the great disparity of numbers, made a gallant defence; but the odds were too great, and they were at length obliged to retreat over the river, leaving Bar-sur-Aube and 500 prisoners in the hands of the Allies. Their total loss was 3000 men, but they lost neither guns nor standards—a very honourable circumstance to them considering the inequality of force. The Allies were weakened by nearly as many, and Count Wittgenstein was so severely wounded, that he was obliged to cede the command of his corps to General Raeffskoi. Prince Schwartzenberg also was slightly wounded—a sure proof how serious matters had become when the generals exposed themselves so much in an inconsiderable encounter. The issue of the action, though not important in material results, was very much so in its moral consequences, for it restored the spirit of the Grand Army, which had been much weakened by the late disaster, and arrested a retreat certainly across the Vosges Mountains, and possibly as far as the Rhine.

5. Renewed active operations by the Grand Army. Combat of Bar-sur-Aube. Feb. 27.

[1] Burgh. 160, 161; Vaud. ii. 75-80; Koch, ii. 8-11; Plotho, iii. 241-244.

This auspicious commencement encouraged Prince Schwartzenberg to more extensive operations of an offensive character. Having collected four corps, mustering 60,000 combatants, without counting the Guards, who were in reserve at Chaumont, he advanced against Marshal Macdonald, who, having been left by Napoleon to watch Schwartzenberg, with his own corps and those of Oudinot and Gerard, had only been able to assemble 35,000 men, and had taken post with them on a strong position on the elevated plateau of Laubressel to cover Troyes. Deep marshes protected the front of the position, and rendered it in ordinary seasons unassailable there; but a hard frost having covered them with a solid barrier of ice, the Allies were enabled to advance directly

6. Combat of La Guillotière. March 3.

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against it, while, at the same time, they turned its left flank by a side attack. Seeing this, Macdonald withdrew his men, and a general retreat commenced to Troyes, in the course of which the Allies took 1500 prisoners and nine guns, while their entire loss was only 800 men. After this second victory, decisive success was in their power; for they had 90,000, including the Guards, to which the French, after the two defeats, could only oppose 30,000; and Napoleon with his redoubtable Guards and cuirassiers was far distant, engaged with Blucher on the Aisne. But the Austrian Cabinet had not lost hope of bringing Napoleon to reason, and concluding a peace which might preserve his family on the throne; and accordingly they paralysed Schwartzenberg's operations, and doomed him to an inactivity inexplicable on merely military considerations, when decisive success had come within their reach. The Russian reserves were brought up from Chaumont to the neighbourhood of Montierender. But nothing vigorous was attempted. Ninety thousand Allies seemed paralysed by 30,000 French, and no diversion was thought of, even when the scales hung comparatively even between Napoleon and Blucher on the Aisne. In vain Alexander urged Schwartzenberg in the strongest manner to move forward and threaten Paris, in order to relieve Blucher, who now had the whole weight of the French Emperor on his hands. Nothing could divert the Austrian Cabinet from their determination to gain time, in order to give Napoleon time to save his throne.[1] * Schwartzenberg advanced indeed to Troyes

[1] Koch, v. 34, 35; Burgh. 176; Die Grosse Chron. iii. 472-476; Plotho, iii. 251, 252.

* "The Emperor considers that the advance of the Grand Army to Sens is drawing us away from the enemy, and that therefore it is indispensable to direct all our forces to the right towards Arcis, between that town and Vitry; and, at all events, to reinforce them with the reserve, which should be ordered to move forward."—ALEXANDER *to* SCHWARTZENBERG, *March* 8, 1814. "In consequence of intelligence received from Field-Marshal Blucher, the Emperor conceives it indispensable to begin to move by the right between Bar-sur-Aube and Vitry."—ALEXANDER *to* SCHWARTZENBERG, *March* 11, 1814. "I hasten to report to your Highness the reports received from Count St Priest. His Majesty has charged me to inform you that it is now more necessary than ever to act on the offensive. Henceforth your hands will be *completely unbound*,

on the 5th, pushing his advanced posts to Sens and Pont-sur-Yonne, but there he halted, and Macdonald withdrew unmolested behind the line of the Seine, where he established himself, with headquarters at Provins.

7. Important retaking of Soissons. March 2.

While the Allied Grand Army in Napoleon's absence was gaining these considerable advantages in the direction of Troyes, and prevented only by the separate interests of the Cabinet of Vienna from following them up to the walls of Paris, a very different species of warfare had got up between Blucher and Napoleon on the banks of the Aisne. No sooner did the veteran Marshal hear of Napoleon's approach than he gave orders to concentrate his troops, which now amounted to nearly 50,000 men, without counting Winzingerode and Bulow's corps, just put under his orders by Lord Castlereagh's exertions, which were as many more. Having drawn in his men, Blucher retired, as already mentioned, across the Marne, which he passed at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, breaking down all the bridges in his retreat, and, after a demonstration against Meaux, which led to a sharp skirmish on the banks of the Ourcq, took the road to Soissons. He intended to have given battle with his whole united forces at Oulchy, on the right bank of the Ourcq, and his troops were all under orders to concentrate there: but to reach that place it was necessary for Bulow, who was coming from Laon, to cross the Aisne; and the bridge of Soissons, held by the French, was the only one which spanned its waters, which were now rolling in an impetuous torrent, being largely swollen by a sudden thaw. Winzingerode, coming from Rheims, was on the left bank, the same side as Blucher, with 26,000 men, so that a junction with him could at any time be effected; but for Bulow to come up and reach the appointed point of rendezvous at Oulchy, it was necessary for that general to get across the Aisne, and the only bridge over it was in the hands of the enemy.

*and you may act according to military calculation.*"—VOLKONSKY (Aide-de-camp to Alexander) *to* SCHWARTZENBERG, *March* 12, 1814; DANILEFSKY, 194, 195.

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Napoleon had 60,000 men under his command, animated with the prestige of recent victory; and the position of the Allies was very hazardous, as, if attacked, they would have to fight with a swollen impassable river in their rear, threatening the most serious danger in the event of defeat. From the embarrassment consequent on this hazardous position they were relieved by the capitulation of Soissons, which took place in consequence of violent threats held out by Bulow and Winzingerode, who appeared on opposite banks of the river at the same moment beneath its walls, against the garrison, which was only 1000 strong, under General Moreau. The importance of gaining possession of the passage over the Aisne at this moment was so evident, that when the French governor made some difficulty about capitulating unless he was allowed to bring away his guns, Woronzoff observed, that "so far from objecting to this condition, he would gladly make the French a present of his own guns on the condition of their immediately evacuating the fortress." The place was delivered up accordingly, and the Allied army gained the great advantage of being able to form a junction with Bulow on the opposite side. They were now above 100,000 strong, and perfectly concentrated — a state of things which proved decisive of the fate of the campaign and of Napoleon, and was directly and exclusively owing to the moral courage of Lord Castlereagh in putting Bulow and Winzingerode under Blucher in the important conference at Bar-sur-Aube on the 25th February.[1]*

[1] Thiers, xvii. 435-443; Muffling, 473; Dan. 207-209; Koch, i. 374-376; Vaud. ii. 15, 16; Marm. vi. 205-207.

* There can be no doubt that the capitulation of Soissons, as matters stood, was a great advantage to the Allies; but the French historians are altogether in error when they describe it as the most decisive event of the campaign—second in historical importance only to Grouchy's eccentric march to Wavre instead of Waterloo on 18th June in the succeeding year. M. Thiers says:—"Quelque parti qu'il adoptât, Blucher était réduit à combattre avec l'Aisne à dos, et avec 45,000 hommes contre 55,000. . . . Qu'il voulût s'arrêter à Soissons pour y livrer bataille adossé à une rivière, ou qu'il voulût remonter l'Aisne, la position était la même. S'il s'arrêtait devant Soissons, Napoléon, se réunissant par sa gauche à Marmont et Mortier, tombait sur lui en trois ou quatre heures de temps; s'il voulait remonter l'Aisne pour y établir un pont, ou se

8. Concentration of the Allied army on the road from Soissons to Laon March 4.

The delay in getting possession of Soissons, however, having rendered the concentration at Oulchy impossible, the whole of Blucher's army defiled with Winzingerode's corps over the bridge of Soissons, on the 4th March, and they were all united on that day, on the summit of the plateau overlooking Soissons, on the road to Laon. Napoleon was so irritated at General Moreau for giving up

servir de celui de Bery-au-Bac, Napoléon de Fismes se jetait encore plus directement sur lui. . . . La perte de Blucher était donc assurée, et qu'allaient devenir alors Bulow et Winzingerode errant dans le voisinage pour le rejoindre? que devenait Schwartzenberg resté seul sur la route de Paris? Les destins de la France devaient donc être changés, car quel que pût être plus tard le sort de la dynastie impériale (question fort secondaire dans une crise aussi grave), la France victorieuse aurait conservé ses frontières naturelles! . . . Voici comment s'était accompli cet événement, *le plus funeste de notre histoire*, après celui qui devait un an plus tard s'accomplir entre Wavre et Waterloo."—THIERS, xvii. 443, 444. Amidst some truth there is great exaggeration in this statement. It is all demolished by the single fact, which is studiously keep out of view, that as Bulow was on the right bank of the Aisne, *Winzingerode was on the left, and it was to Woronzoff, commanding one of his divisions, that Soissons capitulated.* Blucher, therefore, had on the left bank of the Aisne not 45,000 men, as Thiers says, but 75,000 men; and he was actively engaged in constructing a bridge to bring Bulow over, or himself to join him, when Soissons capitulated. See MUFFLING, *Aus Mein Leben*, 124.* Winzingerode was lying in the valley of the Aisne when Blucher approached, and he failed to come to the rendezvous at Oulchy, on the Ourcq, from having engaged with Bulow in the attack on Soissons, he being on the left and Bulow on the *right* bank. If Napoleon had attacked Blucher, therefore, when forced back to the Aisne, he would have had not 48,000 but 75,000 men on his hands. Their situation however was critical, with Napoleon in their front and the Aisne in their rear; and the fall of Soissons was undoubtedly a great advantage, though by no means so important as the French writers represent. It is singular how Thiers, in so important a matter, should have fallen into such an error, when he himself says that Winzingerode commanded on the *left* bank of the Aisne; and he adds, "Le 3 au soir, Bulow et Winzingerode *se donnèrent la main sur l'Aisne*, et c'est ainsi que le 4 dans la journée Blucher trouva ouverte une porte qui aurait dû être fermée."—THIERS, xvii. 447. What decisively proves that Blucher by no means ran the risk alleged by the French historians on this occasion is the *fact*, that his whole baggage went up the left bank of the Aisne by Fismes to Bery-au-Bac, where they crossed that river, *without being molested by the enemy.* Much more must the columns of infantry and cavalry been able to do the same. For this decisive fact we have the authority of Baron Muffling, Blucher's quartermaster-general. "The baggage," says he, "was sent forward to Fismes. Conformably to this disposition the baggage was to march on the 4th March from Fismes to Bery-au-Bac. The baggage of York's and Kleist's corps obeyed this order, and crossed the river without difficulty; a portion of Sacken's, on the contrary, from some misunderstanding, remained at Fismes, and was captured that afternoon."—MUFFLING, 458, translation.

* "Bulow stood on the right bank of the Aisne, Winzingerode on the left; the communicating bridge was to be constructed at Vailly."—MUFFLING, 467, translation.

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the place without firing a shot, that he ordered him to be handed over to a military commission, and shot in twenty-four hours, on the Place de Grève.* As Soissons was now in the hands of the Allies, he was retarded a day and a half securing a passage higher up the stream, which gave time to the Allies to organise their great army on the level plateau between Soissons and Laon. Independent of the important accession of strength thus gained by Blucher, which more than doubled his effective force, he acquired much by the character of the generals of corps with whom he was now associated, for he had the highest opinion both of Bulow and Winzingerode, the former of whom had greatly distinguished himself in the campaign of the preceding year in Germany, while the latter he knew well to be one of the most able and enterprising cavalry officers in the whole Russian army. "When the two armies were united," says an eyewitness, Baron Muffling, "the aspect of the Army of Silesia, with their bronzed visages blackened by the smoke of the bivouacs, long beards, torn mantles, worn leather breeches, and unpolished arms, but erect carriage and strong limbs, formed a striking contrast to the splendid uniforms, burnished muskets, and well-filled baggage-waggons of the corps of Bernadotte's army." "These men have much need of rest," said Bulow to Blucher, as the veterans of the Army of Silesia marched past. In effect, they had arrived nearly at the last stage of physical effort, having been uniformly marching or fighting for two months.[1]

[1] Muffling, Mem. Leben, 125, 126; Claus. vii. 457; Koch, i. 376; 377; Dan. 210, 211; Thiers, xvii. 449-451.

Napoleon having determined to win the bridge over the Aisne at Bery-au-Bac, above Soissons, or to construct one in that quarter, and not being fully informed of the magnitude of the accession of strength which the Army of Silesia

* "Le 3, à midi, le Général Moreau est sorti de Soissons avec les honneurs de la guerre, et a emmené quatre pièces de canon. Faites arrêter ce misérable ainsi que les membres du conseil de défense ; faites-les traduire par-devant une commission militaire composée de généraux, et, pour Dieu, faites en sorte qu'ils soient fusillés dans les vingt-quatre heures sur la Place de Grève! Il est temps de faire des exemples."—THIERS, xvii. 449.

had secured by the junction of Bulow and Winzingerode's corps, prepared to cross the river there and advance on Laon. Blucher meanwhile took post at CRAONNE, on the plateau which hangs over and extends from the road from Bery-au-Bac, by which the enemy was now approaching, to the great road from Soissons to Laon. The position there chosen was extremely strong. It consisted of a neck of land not half a mile broad, but a mile and a half long, bounded on either flank by steep slopes leading down to the ravines of Foulon and Ailles, the sides of which, difficult of ascent even to active infantry, were wholly impracticable for cavalry or artillery. The little river Lette flowed near by, in a straight line, in the bottom of the ravine to the north: at the distance of a mile from the southern edge of the plateau, the Aisne ran in a deep and nearly parallel channel from east to west. A cross gully, of no great depth, crossed the plateau at right angles to the ravines on either side, and it was there Blucher resolved to make his first stand. The neck of the plateau at this point was only 500 yards across, and behind it another position of equal strength was formed by some eminences, like bastions, stretching each half-way across. The upper parts of the hollows on either side were filled with wood, impervious either to cavalry or artillery.[1]

9. Advance of Napoleon in pursuit, and Blucher takes post at Craonne.

[1] Personal observation; Koch, i. 389; Thiers, xvii. 454; Marm. vi. 208.

It was not by any means, however, his whole force which Blucher had assembled in this strong position. The narrow extent of the ground on the plateau itself forbade the extension of any considerable force upon it. Besides the central position of Craonne, it was necessary to occupy Laon, commanding the communication with the Netherlands and Soissons, which guarded the important bridge over the Aisne and the direct road to Paris. To accomplish these objects, Bulow with his whole corps, 17,000 strong, was stationed in that town and its neighbourhood. D'York was posted on the plateau between Laon and Soissons with 23,000, including Kleist's corps. Soissons was occupied by 9000 veterans of Langeron's corps. Win-

10. Force which was here assembled by the Allies.

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zingerode's infantry, under Woronzoff and Strogonoff, was posted with Sacken in reserve, in a very strong position on the plateau of Craonne, forming the principal avenue to the position from Bery-au-Bac, where the French army crossed the Aisne; while Winzingerode, who was intrusted with a body of 10,000 cavalry and 60 pieces of horse-artillery, and was to be supported, if necessary, by Kleist and Langeron, was instructed to pass the Lette, and fall on the right flank or rear of the French army, when actively engaged with the Russians in front, on the neck of the plateau. The Russian position, as a whole, might be regarded as formed by a mass of elevated plateaus, accessible only by Soissons on the south-west, and over the narrow plateau of Craonne on the south-east, with the Aisne flowing in a deep and impassable channel all along its front. The only bridges over it were those of Soissons and Bery-au-Bac, the former of which was in the hands of the Allies; and though there were two intermediate fords, yet they were of such a kind as did not endanger the position. On this strong ground the Allied army, 109,000 strong, were now assembled; but from their great and unavoidable dispersion, a small proportion of their great force was alone posted on the decisive position on the plateau of Craonne. The force there assembled consisted only of 22,000 Russians of Woronzoff and Strogonoff's divisions of Winzingerode's corps, with 60 guns. Sacken's corps was in reserve, but never was under fire during the whole of the desperate actions which ensued; and Winzingerode's horse, as will immediately appear, from mistaking their way, did not appear at all on the field of battle.[1]

[1] Muff. 472, 473; Koch, i. 391; Die Grosse Chron. iii. 575-577; Thiers, xvii. 457, 458.

11. Napoleon's forces, and reasons for hazarding an attack.

Napoleon's force was much less considerable, for it did not at the very utmost exceed 50,000 men; and from the necessity of guarding different points, he could not bring more than 40,000 into the field at any one point. In these circumstances it appears almost an act of madness to have hazarded an attack on a veteran army strongly

posted, and so very superior in number; and it is accordingly condemned as such by Marshal Marmont in his *Mémoires.** But the truth is, that in acting in this manner the French Emperor was no longer a free agent—he was forced on by an invincible necessity. Marmont tells us that such had been the losses of the French army in the active campaign which they had carried on for the last two months between the Seine and the Marne, that Napoleon could never reckon on more than 40,000 men under his immediate command, and often had only 30,000 whom he could bring actually under fire.† In making the furious onslaught which he did with a force so extremely inferior, on Blucher's strong position around Laon and behind the Aisne, his object was to force his way through, so as to lend a hand to the Flemish garrisons, who had received orders to be in readiness to break through the feeble blockading force of landwehr by which they were watched, and come to join him. By this means he expected out of the strongholds of Flanders, Holland, Rhenish Prussia, and the Rhine, to draw at least 50,000 excellent troops, who would be much more than a match for the blockading forces by which they were observed, and enable him to threaten the rear of Schwartzenberg and Blucher's armies with 100,000 men, all veteran sol-

* "Attaquer Blucher quand l'Armée du Nord venait de le joindre, et que ses forces réunies s'élévaient certainement à cent mille hommes, était folie. C'était renouveler d'une manière plus entière et qui pouvait être plus funeste la faute de Brienne. A Brienne on avait échappé par miracle à la destruction, et on allait de gaieté du cours provoquer des chances encore pire; car, en combattant en avant de l'Aisne et de Soissons occupés par l'ennemi, si celui-ci eut eu la moindre resolution et eut agi avec plus de calcul, personne n'échappait de l'armée Française."—MARMONT, *Mémoires*, vi. 209, 210.

† "Jamais, dans le cours de cette mémorable campagnes, Napoléon n'a eu à sa disposition entre la Seine et la Marne plus de quarante mille hommes. Les efforts continus que l'on ne cessa de faire pour operer des levées, et nous les envoyer, n'eurent d'autre résultat que d'entretenir le nombre des combattants à peu près à la même force. Les détachements, arrivant journellement à l'armée, remplaçaient à peine les pertes causés par les combats, les marches, et la désertion, dont l'effet se fit toujours plus ou moins sentir. Les mouvements de l'Empereur d'une rivière à l'autre, avec une partie de ses forces, sa Garde, ses reserves, et son artillerie, partaient momentairement l'armée, où il se trouvait à environs trente mille hommes.—MARMONT, v. 209, 210."

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diers. He had become sensible of the enormous mistake he had committed in leaving so large a part of his best forces to be shut up in the fortresses, when every sabre and bayonet was of value on the theatre of war between the Seine and the Marne, and he took this mode of correcting it. Great as the force was by which he was opposed, after Blucher's army was doubled by the junction of Winzingerode and Bulow's corps, he was very near succeeding; and had it not been for that junction, he, beyond all doubt, could have done so. It was Lord Castlereagh's moral courage at the council of war at Bar-sur-Aube, on the 25th February, which, by doubling Blucher's force, caused this well-conceived design to miscarry, and was the immediate cause of the overthrow of the Napoleonic dominations in Europe.*

* "Il imagina qu'il serait possible de tirer parti contre l'ennemi des garnisons, puisqu'ils se servaient contre nous des troupes de blocus, et de mettre ainsi à profit ce qu'il appelait dans son langage profondément expressif, *les forces mortes*. En conséquence, il résolut de mobiliser tout ce qu'il y avait de troupes disponibles dans les places, et de les en faire sortir pour composer une armée active dont le rôle pourrait devenir des plus importants. On avait jeté dans les forteresses de la Belgique, du Luxembourg, de la Lorraine, de l'Alsace, des conscrits qui, placés dans de vieux cadres, avaient dû acquérir une certaine instruction, depuis deux mois et demi que durait la campagne. . . . Ces données admises, il était possible de tirer de Lille, d'Anvers, d'Ostende, de Gorcum, de Berg-op-Zoom, 20,000 hommes environ, et 15,000 au moins. On devait en tirer plus du double des places de Luxembourg, Metz, Verdun, Thionville, Mayence, Strasbourg, etc. Si donc, après avoir mis Blucher hors de cause, Napoléon, à qui il resterait 50,000 hommes à peu près, en recueillait 50,000, en se portant par Soissons, Laon, Rethel, sur Verdun et Nancy, il allait se trouver avec 100,000 hommes sur les derrières du Prince de Schwartzenberg, et sans aucun doute ce dernier n'attendrait pas ce moment pour revenir de Paris sur Besançon. Au premier soupçon d'un pareil projet, le généralissime de la Coalition rebrousserait chemin, poursuivi par les paysans exaspérés de la Bourgogne, de la Champagne, de la Lorraine, lesquels, abbatus d'abord par la rapidité de l'invasion, avaient senti depuis se réveiller en eux l'amour du sol dans toute sa vivacité. Il arriverait ainsi à moitié vaincu pour tomber définitivement sous les coups de Napoléon. Ce plan si hardi était fort exécutable, car le nombre d'hommes existait, et le trajet pour les rallier n'exigeait ni trop de fatigue, ni trop de temps. En effet de Soissons à Rethel, de Rethel à Verdun, de Verdun à Toul, le chemin à faire n'excédait guère celui qu'on avait déjà fait pour courir alternativement de Schwartzenberg à Blucher. D'ailleurs, peu importaient deux ou trois jours de plus, quand la simple annonce du mouvement projeté aurait ramené l'ennemi de Paris vers les frontières, et dégagé la capitale. Ainsi la guerre pouvait être terminée d'un seul coup si la fortune secondait l'exécution de ce projet, car certainement le Prince de Schwartzenberg, déjà réduit à 90,000 hommes par le détachement envoyé à Lyon, re-

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Full of this plan, which, how hazardous soever, promised such important results, Napoleon in the first instance made an assault on Soissons, so recently occupied by the enemy, intending, if he took it, to make his attack by the direct road by that town to Laon. But although the onset was made with great gallantry by the corps of Marmont and Mortier, it was successfully resisted by Langeron's Russian veterans under Radzewitz, and after losing 1200 men in the attack, the assaulting columns drew off. Meanwhile he himself moved the remainder of his troops to his right, up the valley of the Aisne, intending either to construct a bridge of trestles, or find a passage at Bery-au-Bac, where there was one of stone in the hands of the Russians. Here he was more fortunate than he had been at Soissons. General Nansouty, with his advanced-guard, by a sudden attack made himself master of the town and bridge of Bery-au-Bac, which had been negligently guarded by the Cossacks, while Rheims was taken by General Corbineau, with 2000 prisoners and much baggage. Napoleon immediately crossed the greater part of his forces over the bridge of Bery-au-Bac, and got himself established in force on the right bank of the Aisne with 30,000 men without being disquieted by the enemy, who, deceived as to the real amount of his force, and conceiving they were in presence of the Emperor with 60,000 men, had merely established themselves on the neck of land on the plateau of Craonne, by which the road from Bery-au-Bac to Laon passed, with Winzingerode's men in front, Sacken's in support a mile and a half behind, and Langeron's in reserve a league back, intending to bar the access from the south-east to the plateau of Laon.[1]

12. Napoleon is repulsed at Soissons, but takes Bery-au-Bac, and crosses the Aisne. March 5.

[1] Muffling, 478, 479; Thiers, xvii. 435, 436; Dan. 215-217; Plotho, iii. 286; Koch, i. 386, 387.

The Emperor, being determined to force a passage, commenced the attack on the neck of the plateau of

"venant traqué par les paysans de nos provinces, ne pourrait pas tenir tête à une armée de 100,000 hommes, commandée par l'Empereur en personne."—THIERS, xvii. 438-440.

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13. Battle of Craonne. March 7.

Craonne at nine in the morning of the 7th March. The main attack along the plateau from the ravine on its left, which was preceded by a hundred guns, was intrusted to Marshal Victor; and he was supported on his right by Ney, who was to lead his corps from the valley of the Lette up against the village of Ailles and the left flank of the plateau; and on his left by a detached column, principally of cavalry, under Nansouty, which was to ascend from Ouche, in the valley of Foulon, and assail its right. It was intended that these flank attacks should scale the steep banks on either side, at the moment that the Allies were seriously engaged on the top with Victor in front. After a severe conflict, Victor made himself master of the farm and wood of Vauclerc, on the left of the plateau; but when he began to advance along the summit, and got within reach of Woronzoff's guns, he was received by so tremendous a fire from sixty pieces admirably posted on the neck, that he was obliged to withdraw beyond the reach of the discharge. Meanwhile Ney, farther on in the valley of the Lette on the Allied left, no sooner heard the cannon-shot on the summit than he commenced a vigorous attack on the village of Ailles, overhanging the Lette, with the divisions of the Guard which he commanded, and soon his advanced-guard were seen climbing the steep ascent above that village, while, on the other side, Nansouty's horse were ascending the slope on the left which leads from the hamlet of Vassogne. No sooner did Napoleon perceive the French uniforms appearing on either side of the top, than he ordered Victor's men, who were re-formed in close column, to advance again to the attack along the neck of the plateau. With such vigour did this column rush forward that one of the Russian batteries was carried, but in a few minutes retaken.[1] The position of the Russians on the summit, however, had now become very hazardous, for the forces in the valley of Foulon on their right, and of the Lette on their left, were every minute

[1] Thiers, xvii. 460, 461; Dan. 225, 226; Koch, i. 394, 395; Plotho, iii. 290, 291.

increasing, and the expected succour which was to have met them had not made its appearance.

This arose from a deviation from orders on the part of Winzingerode, who had made an unauthorised circuit with his corps of 10,000 cavalry and horse-artillery. That general had already been much impeded in his march by the excessive badness of the roads, which the thaw had in many places rendered foot-deep of mud; and when the action commenced at nine in the morning, instead of being, as Blucher supposed, in the rear of the French, he was still in the valley of the Lette at Chevrigny. No sooner did Blucher hear of this *contretemps* than he set off, with his whole staff, at the gallop for Winzingerode's corps, of which he designed to take the command in person, rightly judging that to that body the duty of delivering the final stroke would devolve; and at the same time he sent orders to Sacken, who commanded in chief the forces on the plateau, to retreat if he saw himself in danger of being turned by the valleys on either side. The Field-Marshal did not overtake Winzingerode till he had reached Bruyères, and he then found that, instead of selecting Neuville as the point of passage of the Lette, he had gone on to Chevrigny, which occasioned a circuit of at least three leagues, and rendered it impossible for him to reach the scene of action in time to be of any service. Deeply mortified by this untoward circumstance, which deprived him of the immense advantage which he anticipated from the flank attack of so large a body of horse when the battle was fully engaged in front, Blucher resolved to concentrate his troops and fight the final battle at Laon; and as he knew that Sacken with Winzingerode's infantry was overmatched on the plateau, he sent orders to him to retreat in the direction of that town.[1]

1814. Winzingerode's detour obliges Blucher to retreat.

[1] Muffling, 480, 481; Thiers, xvii. 461-463; Dan. 226-228; Plotho, iii. 290, 291; Koch, i. 399, 400.

But it was an easier matter to give orders to retreat than execute them without disaster, in presence of Napoleon with 30,000 veteran troops, of whom 6000 were

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admirable horse. Woronzoff, who commanded the Russians engaged, Sacken being far in the rear, was, however, equal to the emergency. At two in the afternoon, after having made good the post for five hours against superior forces, he gave orders to retire, which was done with undaunted firmness and uncommon skill. Then shone forth in its highest lustre the steadiness of the Russian soldiers in retreat, beyond all question the first in Europe in that difficult and trying operation. The troops were all formed in squares, which fell back by alternate bodies, the artillery in the openings, and the dismounted guns with such of the wounded as could be removed in front of the retreating column. The moment that Napoleon saw the retrograde movement commencing, he brought up all his available guns, a hundred in number, to the front, which sent a storm of round shot among the retreating columns, while his whole cavalry were hurled upon the masses in a headlong charge along the neck of the plateau. It seemed impossible that the Russian squares, encumbered with wounded and dismounted guns, could withstand so terrible an onset. Slowly, however, and steadily, they pursued their march, the squares alternately facing and discharging their pieces, while the guns in the intervals fired incessantly on the threatening masses of the pursuers. The danger became greater when they came to the extended part of the plateau, because the French horse who had scaled the steep ascent on either side had then room to charge.[1]

15. Retreat of the Russians, and results of the battle.

[1] Thiers, xvii. 460, 461; Muff. 481; Dan. 226-228; Koch, i. 394-399; Vaud. i. 35-37; Plotho, iii. 290, 291.

At this critical moment Wassilchikoff came up with Lanskoy's hussars and Ooshakoff's dragoons from Sacken's corps, the infantry of which was still in the rear, and they instantly charged the enemy with such vigour that the advance was checked, the cavalry thrown back, and time gained to draw off the guns and wounded to the position, which was still stronger, on the second neck of the plateau. There Woronzoff's whole guns not dismounted, sixty-four in number, were posted on the sloping ground in two lines,

16. Close of the battle.

one above another. The Russian infantry retreated slowly and steadily till they came abreast of the lower line, and then, facing about, opened with the artillery a tremendous fire on the enemy, the guns on their upper line at the same time firing over their heads with canister and round shot. The French brought up the Old Guard, which faced the storm with their wonted intrepidity, and Drouot on foot, directing his guns, replied with the utmost vigour to the Russian fire. This awful cannonade, almost unparalleled in war, lasted twenty minutes, when Woronzoff, having gained time for his baggage, dismounted guns, and wounded to gain the great road from Soissons, withdrew, without being further pursued, beyond Vetain, and the French reaped the barren honours of this well-fought field.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 391, 394-396; Plotho, iii. 290, 291; Thiers, xvii. 463-465; Muff. 483; Dan. 229.

17. Material results of the battle.

Such was the terrible battle of Craonne, the most bloody and obstinately contested, if Albuera is excepted, of the whole war. The loss on both sides was enormous; on that of the Russians 6000 were killed and wounded, and the French historians admit a loss of 7000 or 8000.* This loss, in proportion to the number of troops engaged under fire, was greater than in any action during the whole revolutionary contest, Albuera alone excepted. The forces on the opposite sides were nearly equal; for although the French under fire were 29,423, and the Russians only 21,204, yet the latter had, till the artillery of the Guard came up under Drouot, the superiority in guns, and they enjoyed in addition the advantage of an extremely strong position, which the former were obliged to overcome by the sheer force of assault. This circumstance, too, explains how it came to pass that the French, though they gained the victory upon the whole, sustained

* "Les Russes avaient perdu 6000 to 7000 hommes, et on ne sera pas étonné d'apprendre que, débouchant sous un feu épouvantable, nous en eussions perdu 7000 à 8000. La différence à notre désavantage eût même été plus grande, si notre artillerie, retardée non par sa faute mais par la distance, n'était venue à la fin compenser par ses ravages ceux que nous avions soufferts."—THIERS, xvii. 467.

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a greater loss than the Russians, who withdrew from the field. The same thing happened to the Duke of Marlborough at Malplaquet, and to the French at Borodino. It is easily explained when it is recollected how severe are the losses of foot-soldiers, who, unsupported by an adequate amount of artillery, advance to the attack of a resolute enemy, strongly posted, and defended by batteries of heavy guns.*

18. Its moral results.

The moral effects of this desperate shock were felt in both armies. The French mourned the loss of a full fourth of the troops under fire, forming the very *élite* of their force, and began to despair of the final issue of a contest attended with such severe losses without any adequate result. Brave as the conduct of the troops engaged had been, the Emperor was far from being satisfied with it. "I see clearly," said he, "that this war is an abyss; but I shall be the last to bury myself in it. It is not I who will stretch out my hands to receive the fetters, if we must wear them. The Old Guard alone stood firm: all the rest melted like snow." Yet had the French generals and soldiers fought nobly. Victor was severely wounded in the thigh by a cannon-ball; Grouchy, Nansouty, and

| | Infantry. | Cavalry. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|
| * The Russians under fire were, . . | 16,304 | 4900 | 21,204 |
| The French under fire, . . . | 23,073 | 6350 | 29,423 |
| Guns, Russian, . . . . . | | | 84 |
| French, till Old Guard came up, . . . . . | | | 60 |
| After that, . . . . . | | | 120 |

—Koch, i. 391; and *Die Grosse Chron.*, iii. 575-577.

Thiers says (xvii. 466) that the French were 30,000 and the Russians 50,000 in this battle. The well-known inaccuracy, or rather *accurate partiality*, of that able writer in all questions where numbers are involved between the French and their enemies, renders this statement of little weight. But it is apparent how he makes it out without falsifying the returns of any of the Russian corps. He represents the Russians in the battle as composed of the corps of Winzingerode, *Sacken, and Langeron*, and without doubt their united force would have been 50,000 men. But the first only were under fire; the *cavalry* of the second only came up in the close of the day: the whole infantry of Sacken, and infantry and cavalry of Langeron, were a league in the rear, and never under fire at all. Muffling says, "Generals Count Strogonow and Count Woronzow already stood in four or five divisions, and Sacken's formed three more *half a league in their rear*, and *Count Langeron's another again half a league farther back;* the enemy could only attack by attempting to turn the wings by the valleys."—Muffling, 479.

three other generals, wounded. On the Allied side the sensation was still greater, and threatened more serious results. Ill-success, as usual in an army of confederates, was producing divisions. The Russians reproached the Prussians with their having thrown the whole weight of the contest on them: the Prussians retorted by referring to the dreadful loss they had sustained at Vauchamps. The first charge could not be denied; for out of 9000 men who had fallen at Craonne and Soissons, there was hardly one Prussian; and while the whole weight of the contest had fallen on Winzingerode's corps, Bulow's had not fired a shot. A little consideration would have shown that this was the result of accident, and of the gallant defence of Soissons by Langeron's men; for if that town had been taken, Napoleon would have moved direct on Laon by the great road from Paris, and in so doing would have come at once on the corps of Bulow and Kleist, stationed at Laon and the road leading to it from Soissons. When the Russians, too, complained of the weight of the contest having been thrown on the corps of the Army of the North at Craonne, keeping Sacken and Langeron in reserve, they forgot what they themselves had observed when the two armies were united a few days before, and how thin were the ranks and wan the visages of the soldiers of the Army of Silesia, compared to the overflowing array and splendid appearance of those of Bernadotte's comparatively untouched host. But all these considerations were forgotten in the soreness produced by recent disaster, and the angry feelings of both officers and soldiers, constantly breaking out, promised ill for any united action between them.[1]

[1] Muff. 483, 484; Bign. xiii. 271; Fain, 159-161; Koch, i. 404.

19. The Allies concentrate around Laon, and Napoleon advances to attack them.

Having resolved to make his final stand in the splendid position of Laon, and being impressed, from the desperate onslaught at Craonne, with an exaggerated idea of the strength of the French army, Blucher gave orders for the concentration of his troops in every direction. As a necessary consequence Soissons was abandoned by General Radzewil, who could not long have maintained it from

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want of provisions; and with great skill and no small difficulty he eluded the enemy's corps, and reached the general rendezvous around Laon. When the whole army was assembled there, it consisted, after all the losses it had undergone, of 104,000 men, including 22,000 horse and 260 guns—a force fully double of that which Napoleon could bring against it. This formidable array, divided into six corps, guarded the five roads which intersect each other from various quarters in Laon, having that town itself, situated on the summit of a conical hill 300 feet high, garrisoned by 17,000 men, as a huge redoubt in its centre. The two roads from Soissons and Bery-au-Bac unite at Laon. Napoleon, to cover Paris, had now moved to the former, and was approaching along it. In doing so he must come upon Etouville, which is a village two miles from Laon, situated at the extreme of a defile formed by the chaussée running through a marsh up to the foot of the hill, which it ascends by a sloping road. Chernicheff was posted at this village with four Russian regiments and twenty-four guns, with orders to hold it to the last extremity, in order to gain time for the garrison of Soissons to pass over and join the rendezvous. In obedience to his orders, he defended it successfully on the evening of the 8th against the reiterated attacks of Marshal Ney, with his divisions of the Guard, until the garrison was safely over. Then, and not till then, he withdrew, on the morning of the 9th, with his wounded and guns, and joined the general assemblage around the hill of Laon. By his retreat to Laon, Blucher had lost his communication with Nancy, on which he had hitherto relied for provisions; and being absolutely without food, he was obliged to take half of the bread of the two corps of the Army of the North. This embittered the spirit of the two armies, and augmented the general ill-humour, for Bernadotte's men had hitherto experienced no such privations.[1]

[1] Muff. 484; Thiers, xvii. 469-471; Dan. 236, 237; Koch, i. 406-411; Vahr. von Ence, 411.

Napoleon, on his part, felt the necessity, notwithstanding his great inferiority of force, of attacking the enemy

in this strong position, at any hazard. He could not, without expelling them from the plain of Laon, effect his purpose of breaking through and effecting a junction with the garrisons of Flanders; and if he failed in that object, and was driven to continue the defensive struggle between the Seine and the Marne, it was equally indispensable to defeat Blucher's army before that of Schwartzenberg again threatened Paris, or advanced to his support. The odds were great against him, the throw almost desperate, but his affairs were still more so, and nothing but a clap of thunder could extricate him from the dangers with which he was surrounded. Impressed with these ideas, he resolved on a general attack on the Allied position around Laon; and for this purpose, and to give his whole force time to come up, he allowed his army to repose on the 8th, during which Marmont, with his corps, which had crossed the Aisne at Bery-au-Bac, was expected to come up on the right to Athies. Mortier, with the Old Guard, and whole reserve cavalry under Grouchy and Nansouty, advanced by the great road from Soissons, and lay in the flat in the centre; and in front of him was the indefatigable Ney, with his two divisions of the Young Guard, pushed forward close to the defile of Etouville, nearly within cannon-shot of the village of Semilly, at the foot of the hill of Laon, and at the bottom of the sloping road which ascended it. In all, the French Emperor had collected 52,000 men, including 10,000 horse and 180 guns. They were the very flower of the French army, including the whole Guards and cuirassiers, but yet not half the numerical force of the enemy.[1]

20. Plan and movements of Napoleon.

1 Muff. 485, 486; Thiers, xvii. 472-475; Koch, i. 409, 410; Dan. 239; Plotho, iv. 494, 495.

Napoleon was greatly unwilling to hazard a general battle till he heard of Marmont's approach with his corps, 11,000 strong, which formed his right wing, and which was advancing on the road from Bery-au-Bac. Early in the morning Ney got possession of the defile of Etouville and village of Chivy. At noon, having learned that Marmont was approaching, and might be expected on the

21. Battle of Laon. March 9.

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French extreme right about two o'clock, Napoleon pushed forward Ney and Mortier. The former, being favoured by a thick fog, got unperceived into the immediate vicinity of the village of Semilly, at the foot of the hill, of which, by a sudden rush, he made himself master; while Mortier at the same time got possession of Ardon in like manner, also at the hill-foot, but more to the French right. Blucher no sooner saw this advantage gained by the enemy from the summit of the hill where he had taken his station, than he sent Bulow's infantry down the slope to retake Ardon, and Woronzoff's, from the plain on his right, to regain Semilly. Both attacks, which were made with the utmost vigour by the Prussians and Russians, proved entirely successful. Woronzoff not only drove Ney out of Semilly, but, pursuing him vigorously along the chaussée, which crossed the marsh, got into the rear of Mortier's men, who, having been driven by Bulow out of Ardon, were falling back towards Chivy. They seemed on the point of being cut off, for they had lost their only line of retreat across the morass. Seeing this, Ney, with great presence of mind, put himself at the head of some squadrons of the Guard, and charged Woronzoff's troops, while disordered by success, with such vigour that the Russians were arrested, and, the reserves of the Old Guard having soon after come up, the Allies were driven back into Semilly and Ardon, which became the theatre of a desperate and bloody conflict. Four times they were taken by the French, and as often retaken by the Allies; and they finally remained half in possession of one party and half of the other, Ney retaining Semilly, but Bulow holding Ardon. In the plain on the French left, however, a vigorous attack of Charpentier, with two divisions of the Young Guard, on the village of Clacy, was successful, and it was wrested from the hand of Woronzoff's Russians. But no part of the French succeeded in ascending the slopes of the hill, the summit of which remained in the undisturbed possession of the Allied forces.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 475-477; Muff. 485-487; Koch, i. 409-411; Dan. 239, 240.

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These bloody struggles decided nothing, and Napoleon was awaiting the expected signal from Marmont's guns before he made his final attack with the Guards and cuirassiers. At length, at four o'clock, the long-expected sound was heard, and news soon arrived that Marmont had carried the village of Athies; but too late to commence any general operations that evening, at that wintry season. Both sides immediately made preparations to take advantage of this arrival; the French to turn the Allied flank, and cut off their communication by Rheims with the Grand Army; the Allies to surround Marmont's detached corps, and prevent its junction with the French centre. For this purpose Langeron and Sacken were moved up behind Laon to the Allied left, so as to be in a condition to support D'York and Kleist, who were intrusted with the attack; and the whole horse-artillery of the Army of Silesia was massed on the extreme Allied left, so as to be ready to commence the attack. The infantry was arranged in close columns, the cavalry in closed-up squadrons, the horse-artillery in front, and the whole received orders to move on as soon as it was dark in double-quick time, without firing a shot or saying a word.[1]

22. Preparations for a nocturnal attack on Marmont.

[1] Muff. 486; Dan. 240, 241; Koch, i. 414; Plotho, iii. 494.

These arrangements, which were made with great skill, and veiled in profound secrecy, proved entirely successful. The wearied French were just lighting their watch-fires and arranging their bivouacs behind Athies, when the Prussians, in deep array and perfect silence, advanced to the attack, headed by the brigades of Horn and Kleist, led by Prince William of Prussia. At the same time, Ziethen, with the cavalry and horse-artillery, coming down on the right flank of the French, opened fire on the other side, and showers of grape began to fall in their crowded bivouacs. So sudden was the onset, so complete the surprise, that scarce any resistance was made. After a single discharge of grape, Marmont's men broke and fled; and soon the refluent tide, hurrying from Kleist's guns, was

23. Which proves entirely successful.

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broken in upon in flank by the torrent of fugitives seeking to escape the sabres of Ziethen's cavalry, by whom, at the same instant, they had been charged. The two streams, meeting at right angles, immediately got intermingled, and both fled in wild confusion, horse, foot, and cannon, along the road to Bery-au-Bac, closely followed by the Prussian hussars, who made prisoners at every step. Above 2000 men were taken by the horsemen; the darkness of the night alone enabled any to escape. Meanwhile Kleist and York's infantry, preceded by the horse-artillery of both corps, pressed forward in pursuit of the infantry opposed to them, and soon came to the grand park and reserve caissons, the whole of which, with the exception of a few pieces hastily drawn off, fell into their hands. Fifty pieces of cannon, 131 caissons, with 2500 men, were taken; and so complete was the dispersion and ruin of the corps, that out of 11,000 men, of whom it consisted at the commencement of the affair, only a few hundred could be rallied by Colonel Fabvier at daybreak on the following morning, at the entrance of the defile of Festieux, six miles from the field of battle.[1]*

[1] Thiers, xvii. 477-481; Marm. vi. 212-214; Muff. 487; Dan. 240, 241; Koch, i. 415-417.

24. Napoleon continues the attack on the 10th.

Napoleon, little anticipating such a reverse, was busied in making his dispositions for renewing the attack on the following morning, in the plan of which, Marmont, with his corps, was to bear a principal part, when he received intelligence of the disaster which had befallen his right wing. The first accounts even exaggerated the calamity, great as it was: it was said that Marmont's corps had been totally destroyed, and entirely disappeared from the theatre of operations. The Emperor immediately broke forth in a torrent of abuse against that marshal for letting

* "Enfin nous arrivâmes à Festieux, où nous fîmes halte. Ce point étant atteint, nous etions sauvés. Un détachement *de quelques centaines d'hommes* de la Veille Garde, qui s'y trouvait, fut place à l'entrée du défilé, et nous pûmes reposer en sûreté et remettre un peu d'ordre dans les troupes. Le lendemain par suite des dispositions de Napoléon, je me rendis au Bery-au-Bac, et le 11 à Fîmes."—MARMONT, vi. 214.

himself be so surprised, but soon after resuming his presence of mind, he wisely resolved, instead of suspending, to renew his attack in the centre on the following day. To retire immediately after such a disaster would be to acknowledge a defeat, and commence a retreat with an army of 40,000 men in presence of 100,000 flushed with victory, with an impassable river, traversed only by two bridges, in his rear. It was necessary to impose upon the enemy, and gain time for his reserve park and equipages to pass three perilous defiles, before any general retrograde movement was commenced. In pursuance of these views, instead of discontinuing, he resolved to renew the attack on Laon next morning, with fresh vigour and all his reserves. Meanwhile Blucher, in the first instance, had given orders for a pursuit at all points, and Winzingerode, in consequence, on the Allied right, had issued forth and made a furious attack on the village of Clacy, in the plain, situated at a short distance to the French left of Laon, on a slight eminence, and defended by Charpentier's divisions of the Young Guard, supported on their right by Ney's corps. The defence was as obstinate as the assault, which was five times renewed; but at length Winzingerode, seeing he was not supported, was obliged to retire to Laon, whither he was followed by his intrepid adversaries. Ney, with the divisions Meunier and Curial of the Young Guard, renewed the assault on that town by the ascent from Semilly, which he still occupied. But all their efforts were shattered against that impregnable mountain, which seemed to stand as an impassable barrier inscribed with the words, "Hitherto thou shalt come, and no farther." The firm countenance of Bulow's men who guarded the ascent, and the terrible fire which issued from the loopholed walls and houses on the summit, constantly repelled them; and after a bloody conflict the French were withdrawn, and night drew her sable veil over this scene of carnage.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 481-483; Muff. 488, 489; Dan. 242, 243; Koch, i. 419-423.

The position of Napoleon was now extremely hazard-

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25. Desperate position of Napoleon's affairs.

ous. He had lost in the battle of Craonne, and those around Laon, fully 14,000 men—a grievous chasm in his forces, and in his circumstances irreparable, for he had no reserves on which he could fall back to renew the conflict. His project of breaking through the circle of his pursuers, and recruiting his shattered forces by the garrisons in Flanders and on the Rhenish frontier, was finally defeated; the force under his immediate command was reduced to 40,000 men, with which he had to make head against 90,000 at the disposal of the Allied generals immediately in his front, besides a still greater body, under Schwartzenberg, threatening Paris from the south. Marmont's corps, by the entire loss of its artillery, was completely incapacitated for the present, and in his rear was the deep and impassable stream of the Aisne, traversed only by the two bridges of Soissons and Bery-au-Bac. His circumstances appeared altogether desperate, and to any other commander they would have proved so, and led to an immediate accommodation. But Napoleon had not yet lost confidence in his star and the resources of his indomitable mind, and he continued the contest for a few weeks longer. But it was a last and expiring effort; every one saw that he had received his death-blow at Laon, and that his subsequent efforts, though they might prolong the contest, could not avert his fate. It is not a little remarkable that this decisive success should have been owing to an individual of the same family with the one who rendered decisive the triumph of Leipsic, and that Lord Castlereagh did the same essential service to the Allied cause by doubling Blucher's force at the expense of Bernadotte's army in 1814, which Sir Charles Stewart had done in the preceding year by compelling him unwillingly to bring up his columns to the banks of the Partha, in the great battle of nations.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 484, 485; Muff. 491, 492; Burgh. 203.

Considering the vast superiority of forces which the Prussian marshal now enjoyed, it for long appeared inexplicable how he did not take more advantage of it;

and that for nine days after the battle of Laon, while Napoleon, with a defeated and inferior army, was retreating by Soissons and Bery-au-Bac towards Rheims and the banks of the Marne, he remained inactive at Laon, and even allowed his antagonist on the 13th to strike an important blow at the town of Rheims, where St Priest, who had occupied it with 14,000 men, was totally defeated, and the place taken, with 2500 prisoners, and a loss to the Allies in all of 3500 men. The reasons hitherto assigned by the military historians of the Allies for their extraordinary inactivity at such a crisis, though by no means without weight, were not adequate to explain so strange a circumstance, and so much at variance with the previous achievements of the glorious Army of Silesia and its heroic and enthusiastic chiefs. It was true that Blucher, for several days after the battle, was confined to bed by a serious complaint in his eyes; that the army was excessively fatigued by the efforts it had made; and that such was the penury of provisions from the presence of so great a force in a small space, and the loss of the communication with Nancy, on which the commissariat had hitherto relied, that an advance on the direct road to Paris would have induced absolute famine, if done in one mass. But all this would not explain such a prolonged inactivity when Flanders was in the rear, with Bernadotte to keep open the communications, and Napoleon in front with a beaten army, in a situation where a fresh defeat would prove total ruin. Marshal Saxe fought the battle of Fontenoy when confined to a litter; and somehow or other a victorious army seldom fails to find food in its triumphant advance. But the real secret of this inactivity has now been revealed by Blucher's quartermaster-general on the staff. Bernadotte was in the rear, it is true, but he was not to be trusted; nay, he had done enough to show he was seriously to be feared. Infatuated with the idea that he would be chosen by the French nation to succeed

26. Secret history of the inactivity of Blucher after the battle.

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Napoleon, and desirous, above all things, of doing nothing which might interfere with the realisation of that brilliant dream, he had not only halted all the troops still under his command at Liège, so far off as to be of no service to Blucher's army, but issued a proclamation interdicting all armaments in Rhenish Prussia on the part of the Allies, upon the ground that they were "contrary to old treaties, and especially the one *ceding the left bank of the Rhine.*" Nay, so far had his tortuous policy gone, that serious apprehensions were entertained at Laon that he might attack Blucher in rear, or at all events interrupt his whole communications with the Low Countries, and cut off all supplies from that quarter. So strong were the indications of a diverging and treacherous conduct on the part of the Crown Prince, that the Russian commander deemed it indispensable to remain where he was to be prepared for any event; and this explains an inactivity which, on any other supposition, would be inexplicable.*

The successful issue of the battle of Laon, notwithstanding this temporary suspension of active operations, had the most beneficial effect upon the spirits and feelings of the Allied army. "The Russians," says Baron

* "The Field-Marshal's plan of active operations after the battle of Laon very soon underwent an alteration in consequence of the accounts which came from the Netherlands. Notice was sent that the Crown Prince, with the Swedish troops, *had made a halt at Liège, and would proceed no farther.* Moreover, the monarchs had agreed among themselves that the provinces situated on the left bank of the Rhine, Clêves, Gueldres, &c., which formerly had belonged to Prussia, should be restored to that power; and General Von Bulow had therefore sent officers to Clêves to receive volunteers and establish the landwehr, as in the other reconquered Prussian provinces. But the Crown Prince had, on his arrival on the left bank of the Rhine, *interdicted all armaments*, declaring 'that it was contrary to former treaties with France, and *especially the one ceding the left bank of the Rhine.*' These instructions, with some others, awakened old recollections in the Field-Marshal, and excited his apprehension that the policy of Sweden might be different from that of the other Allies. As the communication with headquarters was interrupted, and he had been for some time without news of the Grand Army, he thought himself bound to use the greater precaution, and to hold himself prepared for any event that might occur. These peculiar circumstances will explain why the Silesian army continued, for nine days after the battle of Laon, in a state of inactivity, which could in no way be reconciled with its former conduct."—MUFFLING, 492, 493.

Muffling, "who know how to value bravery in other nations because they are brave themselves, did full justice to the Prussian army, and to Generals Kleist and York, for their ability and skill. The Prussians rejoiced that the lot had now fallen to them to avenge the loss of their brave Allies who had fallen at the battle of Craonne, by a defeat which must essentially contribute to the termination of the war. All were once more contented and joyful, and the discord of previous days was forgotten."[1] This auspicious change was of the greatest importance, for the dissension in the army, in consequence of the disasters of the Prussians and the fearful carnage made of the Russians exclusively at Craonne, had risen to such a height, that but for it they could no longer act together. From this time forward, however, all causes of discord ceased, and all was harmony and concord till they arrived in Paris. A grand review was held of the whole force around Laon on the 17th, when it was found that the reinforcements received by the junction of St Priest's corps and other sources since the battle, had so completely compensated their losses that they mustered 109,000 combatants under arms, of whom 29,000 were cavalry, with 265 guns.[2]

27. Beneficial effect of the battle of Laon on the Allied army.

[1] Muff. 488, 489.

[2] Koch, i. 442-444; Vaud. ii. 209; Die Grosse Chron. iv. 383, 386.

The day after the taking of Rheims, General Jansen arrived at Napoleon's headquarters, bringing with him 6000 men which he had drawn from the garrisons in the neighbourhood of the Ardennes forest in obedience to the orders sent by the Emperor, which nearly compensated half the loss he had sustained at Craonne and Laon. He then held a grand review of his troops, and they amounted to 46,000 combatants; but the gaunt and worn aspect of the men, the threadbare and torn dresses, broken wheels and carriages, and the strange motley of uniforms in which they were clothed, bespoke the exhaustion of the empire, and the melting away of the vast military array which had so long held the world in awe. Napoleon's plan was already formed: he felt too strongly the deficiency of his forces

28. Napoleon's plans at this time.

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and their desperate exhaustion, not to be aware that he could not much longer maintain the contest against the superior numbers by which he was threatened, and that his only chance of success was by breaking through the circle of his pursuers, and reinforcing his army by the garrisons which now lay inactive on the Rhine. He now felt in all its bitterness the fatal fault he had committed in striving to retain everything, and leaving more than half his disposable forces in distant garrisons when the centre of his power was violently assailed, and every sabre and bayonet was required between the Seine and the Marne. To remedy, so far as it was possible, even at the eleventh hour, this great mistake, he resolved to push forward towards the Rhine with all the troops he could collect, leaving Marmont and Mortier with their two corps, mustering 20,000 combatants, of whom 5000 were horse, and sixty guns, to make head as they best could, between the Aisne and the Marne, against the vast masses of Blucher, at least five times their strength. Previous to engaging in his bold and perilous, though necessary enterprise, he resolved to make a stroke at Schwartzenberg, who, taking advantage of the absence of Napoleon in his campaign against Blucher, and inspirited by the successful result of the battle of Laon, had again moved forward, and pushed his advanced-guard to Provins, within seventy miles of Paris.[1]

[1] Koch, ii. 57-59; Dan. 260, 261; Plotho, iii. 314, 315; Thiers, xvii. 509-513.

29. Gloomy state of general feeling in Paris.

This had become the more necessary that this second advance of Schwartzenberg's had excited the utmost alarm in the capital, and the protracted calamities of the campaign had produced a conviction almost universal, that the war, with Napoleon at the head of affairs, had become interminable; and that if a change of government was not effected, it would end in destroying them all. It could not be said that any conspiracy for the restoration of the Bourbons, or any other change of government, had as yet been formed, though the partisans of the ancient family were close observers of the state of public feeling,

and prepared to take advantage of it should a favourable opportunity occur. The declaration, too, of M. Lynch and the municipality of Bordeaux, in favour of the Bourbons, upon the occupation of that city by the left wing of Wellington's army, had made a great impression, though that prudent chief, in conformity alike with his own inclinations and the instructions of Lord Castlereagh, had immediately after issued a proclamation, declaring that the war was one for security to the nations—not a change of dynasty in France; and that no interference was either intended or would be permitted in the free choice of the French in regard to their internal government.* Still the fact remained, and was incontestable, that the utmost discontent existed among the whole inhabitants of Paris, and an amount of fermentation in men's minds, deemed in the highest degree alarming by the Government and whole local authorities there. Napoleon, who was fully informed of these particulars, and, as usual, ascribed them all, not to his own tortuous policy, but to the incapacity or disaffection of those in authority under him, wrote, in consequence, from Rheims on the 14th March, a letter to the Minister of Police in Paris, one of the most valuable monuments of the age, both as characteristic of the temper of men's minds at that crisis, and of the peculiar type and indomitable firmness of the Emperor's mind.†

* "Le Maire de Bordeaux, le Comte Lynch, se mettant à la tête du mouvement, fit une proclamation dans laquelle il annonçait le rétablissement des Bourbons, et semblait dire que c'était pour rendre à la France ses princes légitimes que les Puissances Alliées avaient pris les armes. Lord Wellington, fidèle à ses instructions comme à une consigne militaire, écrivit au Duc d'Angoulême pour réclamer contre la proclamation du Maire de Bordeaux, et pour déclarer que le renversement d'une dynastie, le rétablissement d'une autre, n'étaient nullement le but des Puissances Alliées, et qu'il serait obligé de s'en expliquer lui-même devant le public, si on ne revenait pas sur l'assertion qu'on s'était permise."—THIERS, xvii. 520.

† "Vous ne mapprenez rien de ce qui se fait à Paris. Il y est question d'adresse, de régence, et de mille intrigues aussi plates qu'absurdes, et qui peuvent tout au plus être conçues par un imbécile comme Miot. Tous ces gens-là ne savent point que je tranche le nœud Gordien à la manière d'Alexandre. Qu'ils sachent bien que je suis aujourd'hui le même homme que j'étais à Wagram et à Austerlitz; que je ne veux dans l'Etat aucune intrigue; qu'il n'y a point d'autre autorité que la mienne, et qu'en cas d'événements

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Having taken his resolution to turn upon Schwartzenberg, and if possible drive him back towards Langres before carrying into execution his projected cross-march towards the Rhine, Napoleon broke up early on the morning of the 17th, and directed his troops across the country from Rheims and the valley of the Aisne towards Epernay on the Marne. He took with him the whole Guard, Young and Old, cuirassiers and reserves, under Victor and Ney, various reinforcements which he had coming up from Paris, in all 12,000 strong, and the 6000 men whom Jansens had brought up to him at Rheims from the Ardennes, amounting in all to 45,000 men. If to these were added the corps of Macdonald, Oudinot, and Gerard, which were observing Schwartzenberg, his effective force would amount to 70,000, a body of men with which he doubted not of being able to effect something important against Schwartzenberg; and if his projected movement towards the Rhine, in which he was to be joined by Marmont and Mortier, was attended with the desired results, it would be swelled by the garrisons there to 135,000. He arrived the same night at Epernay, when his wearied troops for a time forgot their fatigues amidst the delicious wines of that place. He then learned that Schwartzenberg's troops, extremely scattered, were far advanced on the road to Paris on both banks of the Seine, and he resolved in consequence to continue his march towards Fère-Champenoise, crossing in this manner from the valley of the Marne to that

March 30. Napoleon moves against Schwartzenberg. March 17.

pressés c'est la Régente qui a exclusivement ma confiance. Le Roi [Joseph] est faible, il se laisse aller à des intrigues qui pourraient être funestes à l'Etat, et surtout à lui et à ses conseils, s'il ne rentre pas bien promptement dans le droit chemin. Je suis mécontent d'apprendre tout cela par un autre canal que par le vôtre. . . . Sachez que si l'on avait fait faire une adresse contraire à l'autorité, j'aurais fait arrêter le Roi, mes ministres et ceux qui l'auraient signée. On gâte la Garde Nationale, on gâte Paris parce qu'on est faible et qu'on ne connait point le pays. *Je ne veux point de tribuns du peuple.* Qu'on n'oublie pas que *c'est moi qui suis le grand tribun:* le peuple alors fera toujours ce qui convient à ses véritables intérêts, qui sont l'objet de toutes mes pensées." —NAPOLEON *au* DUC DE ROVIGO, *Reims, Mars* 14, 1814; THIERS, xvii. 502, 503.

of the Aube, and threatening the rear and communications of the Austrian Grand Army, as he had done those of the Army of Silesia by his side attack on Champaubert and Vauchamps. The design was ably conceived, and was on the very point of being attended with the most important results; for Schwartzenberg's army was loosely scattered over a vast front sixty miles in breadth, from Fère-Champenoise by Provins to Sens, on the other side of the Seine, with headquarters at Nogent, and it was next to impossible that some of its isolated corps should not be exposed to the redoubtable blows of the French Emperor before succour could arrive.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 513, 521; Muff. 497; Dan. 261; Koch, ii. 60; Burgh. 208-210.

31. Consternation in the Grand Army at his approach. March 17.

No words can adequately paint the dismay which prevailed in the Grand Army when this formidable apparition appeared on their flank at Fère-Champenoise; and their rapidly increasing numbers, and the uniforms of the Guards and cuirassiers among their ranks, left no room for doubt that the Emperor was there in person. Schwartzenberg was laid up with gout in bed, and none of the other generals in his absence would venture to give any orders. To add to the general embarrassment, both Lord Castlereagh and Sir Charles Stewart were absent, being still detained at the Congress of Chatillon, which broke up on that very day. In this extremity the Emperor of Russia acted with a decision which reinstated affairs after a most dangerous crisis. Instantly setting out from Troyes, where he was when the intelligence arrived, he travelled, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Prince Volkonsky, with the utmost haste to Arcis-sur-Aube, where Schwartzenberg now was. Meeting General Toll, the quartermaster-general, in the antechamber, he said, "What are you about here? we shall lose the whole army." "It is a great blessing," replied Toll, "that your Majesty has come; we could not persuade the generals of the danger; but now your Majesty has come, you will set all to rights." Instantly orders were sent out to concentrate the troops in all directions, between Troyes and

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Pogny; Wrede's corps being left in possession of Arcis to guard the important bridge over the Aube at that place. Alexander, who rightly divined Napoleon's intentions, underwent the most dreadful anxiety for the next two days. "These gentlemen," said he to Barclay, looking towards the Austrian generals, "have made my head half grey. Napoleon will amuse us here with insignificant movements, and meanwhile march with the main body of his forces on Brienne, and fall on our communications." [1]

[1] Dan. 265; Koch, ii. 67, 68; Burgh. 212-214.

32. Napoleon's movements and those of the Allies.

In truth the crisis was of the most violent kind, and Alexander was far from being in error in his apprehensions, for the French Emperor, by marching direct on Arcis, from which he was only twenty miles distant, might with ease have routed Wrede, gained possession of the bridge of Arcis, become master of both banks of the Aube, and fallen direct, by following the great road from thence to Troyes, into the centre of the widely scattered Allied army. Ignorant, however, of the scattered condition of his opponents, and believing their main body to be at Provins, when it had really never advanced beyond Nogent, Napoleon, instead of following the direct road and falling on Wrede at Arcis, turned aside to Plancy, where he had assigned a rendezvous to Oudinot, Gerard, and Macdonald, who, being near Provins, had orders to march in that direction to meet him. On reaching Plancy he found that Schwartzenberg was in full retreat, and that consequently his flank movement, from being directed too near the head of the column, had failed. Convinced, however, that it was by threatening their rear alone that he could force the Allies to fall back, Napoleon still adhered to his original plan, and resolved to move to his left and remount the course of the Aube to Arcis, whence he could either threaten their rear by Troyes, or continue his projected movement to recover the garrisons on the Rhine and the Meuse by Vitry and Bar-le-Duc, which would equally

March 19.

menace their great line of communication by Chaumont. His junction with Macdonald's force being now secure, his army would, when all assembled, amount to 70,000 men. Sending orders, therefore, to that marshal to follow him with all speed, he set out early on the 20th, the infantry ascending the right and the cavalry the left bank of the Aube, and came about mid-day to Arcis. But meanwhile the opportunity had been lost, the surprise was over, and the Allied army, in obedience to Alexander's orders, was rapidly concentrating behind the screen of low hills which the high-road from Arcis to Troyes crosses immediately after leaving the former town. In this position they completely barred the highway to Troyes, and as both parties were rapidly concentrating, a great battle, which would probably prove decisive, seemed inevitable. It took place, accordingly, but without the desperate character of the shock at Craonne or Laon; for Napoleon's object was not to engage in an affair of life or death with the Austrian army, but to force them to concentrate and thereby stop their advance to Paris, while he pursued his deep-laid and long-cherished movement to the eastward, between the two Allied armies, to reinforce his troops with the garrisons on the Rhine.[1]

March 20.

[1] Thiers, xvii. 521-523; Lond. 283; Dan. 263, 264; Plotho, iii. 318, 319; Burgh. 210-213.

33. Battle of Arcis-sur-Aube. March 20.

Napoleon arrived at Arcis about mid-day on the 20th, and found the town evacuated by Wrede's corps. It was immediately occupied by Sebastiani's cavalry. Ney's corps from the right bank was quickly passed over, and Friant's division of the Old Guard being close at hand, the Emperor gave orders to continue the advance with the utmost vigour on the road to Troyes, persisting in the opinion, notwithstanding all the information to the contrary, that the enemy were in full retreat, and that they would find only a slender rearguard on the other side of the screen of hills. He was soon undeceived. Hardly had the French advanced-guard begun to ascend the slopes when the Russian cavalry, under Kaisaroff

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started up, and a vehement action commenced between them and the enemy's horse under Sebastiani, who were soon greatly over-matched and driven back in confusion to the bridge of Arcis. Napoleon instantly hurried to the spot, and, making his way to the entrance of the bridge, now choked up with fugitives, drew his sword, exclaiming, "Let me see which of you will pass before me." The presence of the Emperor arrested the panic, and the flight ceased. The moment the bridge was clear, Friant's division of the Old Guard was hurried over in double-quick time, and by a heavy fire drove back the Allied horse. Meanwhile a bloody combat had commenced at Torcy on the French left, farther up the Aube, between Ney with his division of the Young Guard striving to storm and Wrede to defend that village. An Austrian battalion, in the first instance, gained possession of it and held it for half an hour, but Ney's men then retook it. Wrede, upon this, brought up three battalions, who a second time took the town; but Napoleon, who was well aware of the value of the post, immediately recovered it with a body of the Old Guard, who, supported by Ney's men, held it with unconquerable resolution against very superior numbers during the remainder of the day.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 527-529; Dan. 267, 268; Koch, ii. 68, 69; Burgh. 214.

34. The French are repulsed.

The position of the French, who were joined during the afternoon by Lefebvre Desnouettes's cavalry, was extremely strong, forming a semicircle facing outwards, with each flank resting on the Aube so as to be secure against being turned, and the town of Arcis forming an impregnable stronghold in their rear. In this respect it very much resembled the position occupied by them in the preceding year at Dresden. But they had only 25,000 men in line to defend it. The position of the Allies was less favourable, as they formed a larger semicircle facing inwards, embracing a much wider surface, and thus less strong at any given point; but they had an enormous superiority of force, their troops in the field amounting at last to nearly 90,000 men. A third

of this body, however, did not come up till the close of the day, so that, though they had greatly the advantage of numbers throughout, it was not so decided as it would have been if the whole had been up at once. Taking advantage of this circumstance, Napoleon maintained his ground till nightfall, when the Allied reserves, under the Prince Royal of Würtemberg, having arrived, Schwartzenberg ordered a general attack. The Russian batteries of the Guard soon came up to the front, and as they passed the Emperor at the gallop he bade them remember Leipsic. The whole Allied artillery, consisting of 300 pieces, formed in a vast semicircle around the French, continued to fire with the utmost violence till dark. With heroic but mournful resolution the French stood up against the storm of shot, closing in their ranks with the instinct of discipline, as chasms were made by the iron tempest. The Emperor shared its dangers like the meanest soldiers. A bomb fell by his side, which burst, covered him with dust, and wounded his horse. He calmly mounted another, and said to those around, "Fear nothing; the bullet is not yet cast which is to kill me." This dreadful cannonade continued long after darkness had set in, both parties firing in the gloom at the flash of each other's pieces, till it terminated, from mutual exhaustion, about ten o'clock.[1] *

[1] Thiers, xvii. 532-535; Dan. 270; Fain, 181, 182; Plotho, iii. 330-332; Burgh. 216, 217.

Both armies rested on their arms, on the ground on which they had fought, during the night, and it was universally expected in both armies that a desperate

* A striking and characteristic anecdote of Napoleon occurred during this cannonade, which is thus given by M. Thiers:—"Sur le terrain même d'Arcis, et au milieu du feu, s'entretenant familièrement avec le Général Sébastiani, Corse comme lui, et doué d'un grand sens politique, 'Eh bien, général,' lui demanda-t-il, 'que dites-vous de ce que vous voyez?' 'Je dis,' répondit le général, 'que votre Majesté a sans doute d'autres ressources que nous ne connaissons pas.' 'Celles que vous avez sous les yeux,' reprit Napoléon, 'et pas d'autres.' 'Mais alors, comment votre Majesté ne songe-t-elle pas à soulever la nation?' 'Chimères,' répliqua Napoléon, 'chimères, empruntées aux souvenirs de l'Espagne et de la Révolution Française! *Soulever la nation dans un pays où la Révolution a détruit les nobles et les prêtres, et où j'ai moi-même détruit la Révolution!*'"—THIERS, xvii. 533, 534.

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battle would take place on the following day, which, one way or other, would bring this long-protracted struggle to a termination. Everything when the sun rose betokened a renewal of the strife with more vigour and animosity than ever. The Allied reserves were nearly all up. Napoleon had been joined by Lefebvre Desnouettes's division, 7000 strong, during the night. Oudinot's corps was close at hand, and though Macdonald himself, with his own and Gerard's corps, could not be up till night, yet 140,000 men and 500 guns on the two sides were fronting each other within half cannon-shot range. The gunners stood with lighted matches beside their pieces; the horsemen with their bridles over their arms; the infantry at ease, with their muskets resting on their shoulders and the butt-ends on the ground. Every one in both armies was in momentary expectation of the signal-gun being fired, which was to renew the conflict. But hour after hour slipped away in this anxious state, and yet no signal was given, nothing was done on either side. At length, at one in the afternoon, the equipages behind the French army were seen defiling towards the rear, troops began to crowd over the bridges, and all the symptoms of a retreat became manifest. Yet such was the awe inspired by the presence of Napoleon and the aspect of his still imposing masses, that it was not till three o'clock that Schwartzenberg gave the signal to advance. It was then too late at that season of the year to achieve decisive success. It was almost dark before the Allies reached Arcis; so gallant had been the resistance which Oudinot, whose corps had been crossed over to form the rearguard, opposed to their advance. Prince Eugene of Würtemberg then violently assailed Oudinot's rearguard, and his men reached the town along with them, but not in time to prevent their getting across and breaking down the bridge.[1] During the night the French kept up so heavy a cannonade from the opposite bank that all attempts to restore it were fruit-

35. The French retire on the second day. March 21.

[1] Thiers, xvii. 531, 532; Burgh. 217; Fain, 183; Dan. 273, 274; Plotho, iii. 329-334.

less, and when day broke on the following morning Napoleon was far advanced on the road to Vitry, leaving only a strong rearguard at Arcis to retard the passage of the river by the Allied forces.

36. Napoleon's designs after the battle.

The loss on either side at the battle of Arcis-sur-Aube was not so great as might have been expected from the shock of two such powerful armies, commanded by Napoleon and Alexander in person. It amounted on each to about 4000 men, including 800 of the Old Guard made prisoners by the Allies, who also took six guns. It was in the highest degree honourable to the French arms, as the trophies of victory were nearly equally divided; and though they were greatly inferior in number, and abandoned the field of battle, they substantially gained the object for which they fought. Napoleon had no intention of risking a battle *à l'outrance* with the Austrian Grand Army when Blucher, with an army double his own, was in his rear threatening his communications with Paris. His object was to force Schwartzenberg to concentrate, draw back his advanced columns which had begun to threaten Paris, and thus gain time to execute his projected movement towards the Rhine, by which he would threaten the communications of both armies, and ere long double his own disposable forces. In this object he completely succeeded. On the night of the 21st he continued his retreat, or rather *began his cross-march* to Sommepuis, on the road to Vitry and the Rhine, without molestation. Alexander had correctly divined his intentions, when he said he would amuse them at Arcis, and meanwhile move the bulk of his forces to the eastward, and threaten their communications. Sir Charles Stewart also, who had come up from Chatillon after the dissolution of the congress on the 18th, and reached headquarters in time to take part in the movements on the 22d, scanned the French Emperor's designs not less correctly.[1] The day after, he wrote a letter detailing the state of affairs, and his ideas on the objects

[1] Thiers, xvii. 531-533; Fain, 182; Dan. 274; Burgh. 217; Plotho, iii. 329,330.

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of that great general, and the means of thwarting them, with a penetration and sagacity which subsequent events have rendered prophetic.*

37. Napoleon's march to St Dizier. March 23.

From Sommepuis Napoleon continued, on the 22d, his cross-march to Vitry, and sent Ney close up to the walls of that town, who threatened to put the governor and all the garrison to the sword if they did not instantly capitulate. Finding the governor, however, who had 5000 men and 40 guns under his command, proof against these menaces, he turned aside, and, fording the Marne, continued his march to St Dizier, which he reached on the evening of the 23d. He there, on the following day, spread out his wings from Bar-le-Duc on one side to

* "A higher game is about to be played now which will agree better with your blood. I think Buonaparte has never shown himself greater, or played a desperate game more skilfully than since the battle of Brienne. On the Elbe he was quite insane; and his prolonged stay there was the cause of the battle of Leipsic, and all his subsequent misfortunes. Napoleon, beaten on the 9th and 10th by Blucher, retires before him and heads this way. He marches from Fère-Champenoise on Plancy, with a view of intimidating Schwartzenberg, and hoping by a demonstration of an intention to attack him by crossing the Aube to force him to retire. Napoleon, however, being slower than was expected, Schwartzenberg was enabled to concentrate and withdraw his left from Troyes and Nogent-sur-Seine, and assemble in front of Plancy and Arcis. The enemy tried to debouch, on the 21st, at Plancy; but finding themselves strongly opposed they moved in greater force to Arcis, and yesterday morning passed the Aube at both places, which led to fighting all day. The enemy were at length beaten, and retired at all points; 1000 prisoners of the Old Guard are taken and 8 cannons. It was not, however, a general battle. I never thought Buonaparte would debouch across the Aube and place his army between that river and the fork formed by its junction with the Seine. Such an attempt would be out of ordinary prudence. I think, having been very much worsted by Blucher, *he turned down here to give us a knock without risking such a desperate battle, as if lost, with Blucher behind him, must have been his ruin.* Finding Schwartzenberg collected, and certainly more determined than ever he was before, he *is now hatching another expedient.* Being just arrived from Chatillon, I have not as yet got my ideas into proper order; but this is what I conjecture. Castlereagh will tell you all that is going on. I hope it will succeed, as I like to play one game or another decidedly; and, now that we are free, our military plans must be better arranged, and the two armies *must be brought into such close connection that they may strike a blow at the same moment.* I know not Castlereagh's plans, nor are they settled yet. He has *been so invaluable here* that I don't know how they will do without him, and yet he thinks he must go back for Parliament; but can he not come back here? The times are so eventful, *England should be here on the spot.* It will not do else. Think of this. He wants to send me off to Blucher. Castlereagh is now in high favour with the Emperor of Russia."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* EDWARD COOKE, ESQ., *Arcis, March* 22, 1814; *MS.*

Bar-sur-Aube on the other, advancing his headquarters successively from St Dizier to Vassy and Doulevant. His light cavalry from thence got on the great road from Troyes to Chaumont, directly in the rear of the Austrian Grand Army. They here captured a pontoon train with a great quantity of baggage and ammunition which was moving up for the use of the Grand Army, and spread terror in the whole Allied communications from Troyes to Vesoul.[1]

[1] Fain, 185, 186; Koch, ii. 84-90; Plotho, iii. 338; Burgh. 218, 219; Die Grosse Chron. iv. 97-99; Dan. 279.

38. Important interrupted despatches of Napoleon.

The Allied generals were at first induced to suspect a feint when they heard Napoleon was moving towards the Rhine, not retreating to Paris; but their surprise was changed into alarm when intelligence arrived that he stood with his whole army on the flank of their communications, and had already cut them off from their reserve parks and magazines. Napoleon had never entertained a doubt that this state of things would induce the Austrians to retreat, more nervous than any nation in Europe about their communications.* It is more than doubtful whether this result would not have ensued in the present instance, had not an accidental circumstance put the Allied commanders, who were following in Napoleon's footsteps towards Sommepuis, in possession at once of his object in moving on St Dizier, and the extremely critical state of things in the capital. These consisted in two letters to the Emperor, one from the Empress, the other from the Duke of Rovigo. The letter of the Minister of Police announced that beyond all doubt a conspiracy was hatching in the capital, which awaited only the approach of the Allied armies to break out into open insurrection. At the same time another despatch was brought in by a second party of Cossacks,

* "I marched on St Dizier," said Napoleon afterwards to General Kohler, the Austrian Commissioner at Elba, "because twenty experiments had convinced me that I had only to send a few hussars on your line of communications to spread dismay among you. On this occasion I stood on them with my whole army, but you never troubled your heads about me: 'twas because the devil had got possession of you."—DANILEFSKY, 279.

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containing a letter from the Emperor to the Empress, in which he revealed his object in moving on St Dizier, which was to reinforce his army by the garrisons on the Rhine.* These despatches, which were of the last importance, were immediately brought to the Emperor Alexander, who was at Schwartzenberg's headquarters at Dampierre, on the night of the 23d, and he was wakened to read them in the middle of the night. While he was still reading them, another messenger brought in despatches from Count Pahlen, with advices of his having fallen in with Chernicheff at the head of Blucher's advanced-guard, who announced that his general had crossed the Aisne at Neufchatel and Bery-au-Bac, and advanced to Epernay and Chalons.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 550, 551; Dan. 286; Burgh. 224, 339.

39. Sir Charles Stewart and Volkonsky advise to march with both armies to Paris.

Two general officers at the headquarters of the Allies, who entirely agreed in their ideas as to the manner in which the war should be conducted, now rose to prominent importance, and materially influenced the fate of the war. These were Prince Volkonsky and Sir Charles Stewart. The former of these was one of Alexander's aide-de-camps, and had constant access to his person; the latter possessed great weight, not only from his being the brother and known representative of Lord Castlereagh's opinions, but from the inestimable service he had rendered to the Allied cause in the preceding year, at the battle of Leipsic. They both concurred in opinion that the present moment, if properly taken advantage of, might be rendered decisive of the war. Napoleon, pressed between two great armies, each superior in strength to his own, had at length come to the end of his resources. He

* "My love! I have been for some days constantly on horseback. On the 20th I took Arcis-sur-Aube. The enemy attacked me there at eight o'clock in the evening. I took two guns, and retook two. The next day the enemy's army put itself in battle array to protect the march of its columns on Brienne and Bar-sur-Aube, and I resolved to approach the Marne in order to drive them farther from Paris, *by approaching my own fortified places.* This evening I shall be at St Dizier. Adieu, my love! Embrace my son!"—*See* BURGHERSH, 339, and DANILEFSKY, 285. Strange to say, this despatch, on which, as will immediately appear, the fate of the world came to depend, was *not* written in cypher, but in ordinary style.

could no longer keep them both at bay, as he had so long done by maintaining an intermediate position, and striking alternately at one and the other; and the recent advices from Paris proved that discontent was at its height in that capital, and that nothing but the approach of the Allied armies was wanting to cause an insurrection fatal to his power to break out. These views were strongly supported by Count Pozzo di Borgo, who also had constant access to, and great influence with, the Czar; and who, a compatriot of the French Emperor, and deeply injured by him, united to talents of no ordinary kind, and eloquence the most persuasive, a Corsican thirst for vengeance.[1] *

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to E. Cooke, Esq., March 22, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 374; Thiers, xvii. 546, 547.

40. Considerations urged on the other side.

Powerful as these considerations were, and strongly as they spoke to the chivalrous disposition of the Emperor Alexander, already sufficiently disposed to enter into them, there were other arguments, not less weighty, adduced on the other side, and which weighed most strongly with Schwartzenberg, Barclay, and the elder generals, the superiors in rank in both the Imperial armies. The Allied army, it was urged, is not a homogeneous mass, obedient to one will, directed by one interest; it is an aggregate of the troops of many different nations, rivals in war

* "Le Comte Pozzo di Borgo, revenu de Londres, lequel, ayant acquis sur les Alliés une influence proportionnée à son esprit, ne se lassait pas de leur répéter qu'il fallait marcher sur Paris. Le but de la guerre, disait-il, est à Paris. Tant que vous songez à livrer des batailles, vous courez la chance d'être battus, parce que Napoléon les livrera toujours mieux que vous, et que son armée, même mécontente, mais soutenue par le sentiment de l'honneur, se fera tuer à côté de lui jusqu'au dernier homme. Tout ruiné qu'est son pouvoir militaire, il est grand, très-grand encore, et, son génie aidant, plus grand que le vôtre. Mais son pouvoir politique est détruit. Les temps sont changés. Le despotisme militaire accueilli comme un bienfait au lendemain de la révolution, mais condamné depuis par le résultat, est perdu dans les esprits. Si vous donnez naissance à une manifestation, elle sera prompte, générale, irrésistible, et Napoléon écarté, les Bourbons que la France a oubliés, aux lumières desquels elle n'a pas confiance, les Bourbons deviendront tout à coup possibles, de possibles nécessaires. C'est politiquement, ce n'est pas militairement qu'il faut chercher à finir la guerre, et pour cela, dès qu'il se fera entre les armées belligérantes une ouverture quelconque, à travers laquelle vous puissiez passer, hâtez-vous d'en profiter, allez toucher Paris du doigt, du doigt seulement, et le colosse sera renversé. Vous aurez brisé son épée que vous ne pouvez pas lui arracher."—THIERS, xvii. 546, 547.

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divided by language, creed, and interest, whom stern necessity and a universal sense of suffering have alone brought to act together. It has often already been on the point of falling to pieces; a single serious disaster would at once occasion its dissolution, and reinstate Napoleon and the French empire more formidable and oppressive than ever. It is true the flank movement of the Emperor to St Dizier has uncovered Paris, and opened to the Allies the advance to that capital, and the united armies may now advance without serious opposition to Paris. But, meanwhile, what is Napoleon about? He has placed himself on our communications, intercepted all our stores, reserves, and reinforcements; become master of our magazines, and doubled the strength of his active army by the addition of all the garrisons on the frontier and along the Rhine. What will it avail the Allies that they have taken Paris, and brought about a political revolution there, if the French Emperor has meanwhile doubled his military strength, gained possession of all our resources, and, with 130,000 men, lies between our armies and the countries from which alone we can receive either succour or support? Perilous at all times, before the army of the Emperor is destroyed, an advance to Paris has now become doubly hazardous, since by his recent masterly movement his strength has been doubled, and his military position in every respect so much improved. It is evident that no reliance whatever can be placed on Bernadotte, or the Army of the North, which is still at Liège, and has never yet, except by the corps taken from under his orders, taken any part in the campaign.[1] *

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, March 25, 1814, MS.; Dan. 286, 287; Burgh. 220.

* "From the Crown Prince I expect nothing effectual in these, or indeed in any other parts. He is still at Liège, and though I have repeatedly written to Mr Thornton to urge him forward towards Antwerp, no assurance is returned of his being even inclined to move from Liège. In the mean time he is doing all he can to irritate the Dutch, by his treatment of the district about Maestricht as an enemy's country, and loading it with frequent and severe requisitions. He even affects to refuse to recognise the Prince of Orange by his proper titles. His Royal Highness feels the slight, and it is natural that he should do so. Though we are promised Walmoden, not a word is uttered upon

The only wise course is to follow Napoleon wherever he goes, to run him down and destroy him. When that is done, and not till then, a political revolution, to close the drama, may be looked forward to in Paris.

41. Volkonsky's opinions on an advance to Paris.

Opinions were thus divided, when Alexander, who had ridden on in the morning to Sommepuis, summoned his principal officers to ask their advice. The Russian Emperor himself, who always inclined to the opinion that the grand object was to destroy the military power of Napoleon, deemed that the better course would be to unite with Blucher at Vitry, and, with their united force, pursue the French Emperor towards the Rhine. In this opinion Barclay concurred, and Count Toll. Diebitch was of the same way of thinking; but suggested that, while the united armies proceeded in pursuit of Napoleon, Bulow, who lay at Soissons, should make a dash at Paris. But Volkonsky upon this replied, "It is well known that at Paris there are 40,000 National Guards, and depôts of regiments; to these are to be added the corps of Marmont and Mortier, who will, on Bulow's approach, fall back on the capital. It is impossible to expect that with his corps, 30,000 strong, the Prussian general can effect anything against 70,000 men who will be there assembled. On the other hand, if we follow Napoleon we must leave a considerable rearguard to ward off the attack of these two marshals. In these circumstances, I am of opinion that it would be advisable to detach against Napoleon a numerous body of cavalry and some regiments of infantry, with instructions everywhere to prepare accommodation for the Emperor, that it may be believed we are following with the whole army. Meanwhile, we ought to march straight on Paris through Fère-Champenoise, and Blucher

the advance of the Crown Prince from Liège. I wish to God we were fairly rid of this chap, and that he was put down in the midst of his newly-acquired territories in Norway, where he is already, it should seem, fully as popular as he is here, and where he would at least be prevented from doing harm." —LORD CLANCARTY *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Hague, March* 22, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 383, 384.

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through Etoges, keeping up a close communication between the two armies. Following this route, we must attack Marshals Marmont and Mortier wherever we meet them. We shall beat them, because we are greatly superior in force; and each day will place two marches between us and Napoleon." "If it is your Majesty's intention," said Diebitch, "to re-establish the Bourbons, you had better march at once on Paris." "We are not now talking of re-establishing the Bourbons," replied Alexander, "but of pulling down Napoleon. I agree with Volkonsky." The plan of Volkonsky, which was exactly that formed two days before by Sir Charles Stewart, was then unanimously adopted by all present; but before finally adopting it, it was agreed to ride forward to meet the King of Prussia and Prince Schwartzenberg, who were on the road to Vitry. They were speedily overtaken, and the united party ascended a knoll on the road-side, where
March 24. the decisive resolution was adopted. The King warmly approved of the project, which was entirely in unison with his own bold and ardent spirit; and Schwartzenberg, though he observed it would cause him to lose his magazines at Chaumont, promised it his cordial support. Orders were then despatched in all directions to carry it into effect; the Emperor and King proceeded on to Vitry, where they were soon joined by Chernicheff with Blucher's advanced-guard. The Grand Army received orders to march on the following day (25th March) by the great road through Fère-Champenoise on Meaux, and Blucher's to move on the same place from Chalons by Montmirail. Indescribable was the joy which these orders gave to both armies, especially that of Silesia, by which a triumphant advance to Paris was now at length confidently anticipated.[1]

1 Dan. 287, 288; Burgh. 222-225; Plotho, iii. 344; Claus. vii. 488; Muff. 500.

In pursuance of the decision then taken, Winzingerode, with 10,000 horse, 40 pieces of horse-artillery, and a few light regiments of infantry to protect the guns, was detached from the Grand Armies, with instructions to draw

near to Napoleon, observe his movements, and impress him with the belief that he was the advanced-guard of the united hosts which were pressing on in his pursuit. The Russian general marched out of Vitry at the head of his troops at three o'clock in the afternoon of the 24th, taking the road to St Dizier. He ere long overtook the rearguard of Napoleon, which was moving before him on the same road, with whom he had an encounter near Thiéblemont. This, and the report spread as to Alexander being with the advanced-guard, confirmed the French Emperor in the belief that the united Grand Armies were pursuing him, and he in consequence sent orders to Marmont and Mortier to join him, deeming Paris in no danger. Meanwhile Winzingerode, faithfully obeying his instructions, occupied St Dizier with 5000 men, where he ordered apartments to be prepared for the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia, who would be there on the following day, at the same time sending forward Tettenborn with 4000 to the front to draw near to Napoleon, and communicate intelligence as to his movements. The French Emperor, however, learning that cavalry only was following him, suspected the truth, and gave orders for all his troops, which were advancing on the road towards Chaumont, to halt, and retrace their steps towards St Dizier. This retrograde movement quickly brought them in contact with Tettenborn, who, little suspecting such a change of disposition, was leisurely advancing along the banks of the Marne in quest of information. So rapid was the formation, and quick the attack of the French, that the river was crossed, and the Russians were enveloped on all sides, before they had time either to form in battle array or effect a retreat. After a gallant resistance they were broken and driven in great disorder towards Vitry. Winzingerode, who, hearing of the counter-movement of Napoleon, had left St Dizier to support his lieutenant, was next assailed by 8000 French cavalry with such vigour that he too was routed,[1] and the whole

42. Defeat of Winzingerode in following Napoleon. March 25.

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[1] Lond. 295; Thiers, xvii. 616-619; Dan. 327-330; Burgh. 263, 264; Koch, iii. 553.

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driven off in utter confusion towards Bar-le-Duc, where they found refuge in a strong position, flanked by an impassable morass. In this combat the French lost only 700 men, while the Allies were weakened by 3000, of whom 500 were made prisoners.

43. First combat of Fère-Champenoise. March 25.

This was the last gleam of good fortune which shone upon the mighty conqueror in his eventful career. Misfortunes, quick and irretrievable, now crowded upon him till he was precipitated from the throne. On the day preceding that on which this brilliant success was gained near St Dizier, a catastrophe, attended with the most disastrous consequences, occurred at Fère-Champenoise, whither Marmont and Mortier, with the view of joining Napoleon at St Dizier, had bent their steps. Crossing the Marne at Chateau-Thierry on the 21st, they reached Etoges on the 23d, and slept on the night of the 24th,—Marmont on the high road at Soude-St-Croix, and Mortier to the left at Vatry. They were thus advancing directly on the road from Paris to Vitry at the very moment that the Allies were marching from Vitry to Paris. The two marshals had not between them 20,000 men. Alarmed at the evidence of an immense force in their front, afforded by the circle of fires in the eastern horizon, Marmont and Mortier agreed that the latter should, early on the following morning, bring over his corps from Vatry to Sommesous, so as to be united with and in rear of the former. Both would then either advance or retire according to circumstances. Marmont had his men under arms on the morning of the 25th at Soude-St-Croix, when the advanced-guard of the Allies, under the Grand-duke Constantine, in the course of their advance from Vitry towards Paris, came upon him. Falling back towards Fère-Champenoise, Marmont sent messengers to hurry Mortier. When he reached Sommesous, however, the latter had not come up. Marmont sustained in consequence a sharp combat whilst awaiting his arrival. No sooner was their junction effected than both marshals continued their retreat towards

Fère-Champenoise. Withdrawing in presence of an overwhelming force, and skilfully availing themselves of every advantage of ground to retard the pursuit, they suddenly found themselves, when close to Conantry, assailed by an immense body of Russian and Austrian horse, forming the advanced-guard of the Grand Army. The French marshals drew up their men with great skill between two ravines to withstand the attack, and their troops fought with the greatest steadiness and resolution. But all their efforts were in vain against the hourly increasing numbers and headlong attacks of the enemy. Several squares were broken by the charges of the Russian Chevalier Guards and Austrian cuirassiers under the Grand-duke Constantine and General Nostitz, while a large body of cavalry threatened to cut off their retreat. A violent storm of wind and rain at the same time blew in their faces, and prevented them from seeing the enemy till they were close upon them. After a gallant resistance they were thrown into confusion, and driven back into and through Fère-Champenoise, while twenty-four guns and a great number of prisoners fell into the hands of the Allies.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 563, 564; Lond. 287; Dan. 307; Koch, ii. 112-114; Burgh. 229-231; Vaud. ii. 276, 281; Marm. vi. 234-236.

44. Second combat at Fère-Champenoise.

Just after this brilliant success the Emperor Alexander in person arrived at Fère-Champenoise, and took part in a still more important advantage, which was obtained by the Allied cavalry on issuing from that village, over a detached body of the enemy who were approaching it from the Allied right. This column was making its way from Montmirail to join the Emperor Napoleon, near Vitry, and had been driven to the cross-march which brought it to this dangerous vicinity by having met with Blucher's advanced-guard near Bierges. It consisted of 5000 men under General Pacthod, chiefly National Guards, and had in convoy an immense quantity of guns and bread, which it had orders to convey up to the head-quarters of Napoleon. Sir Charles Stewart, ever foremost where danger was to be encountered or glory won, was with Blucher's advanced posts on this occasion; and his

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aide-de-camp, Captain Harris, a most able and enterprising officer, had the good fortune to be the first to descry the approach of this unlooked-for body of enemies, and Sir Charles Stewart immediately sent him to Blucher with the intelligence. "The cavalry," says he, "of Generals Korff and Wassilchikoff was immediately detached in pursuit, and they were driven upon Fère-Champenoise as the cavalry of the Grand Army (with whom the Emperor Alexander now was in person) was advancing from that village. Some attacks of the cavalry were made on this French corps, which had formed itself into squares; and, it is but justice to say, defended itself in the most gallant manner, notwithstanding it was composed of young troops and *Garde Nationale*. When completely surrounded by the cavalry of both armies some officers were sent to demand their surrender; but they boldly resisted the summons, marching on and firing; and they refused to lay down their arms until a battery of Russian cannon had opened, and repeated charges of cavalry at the openings it had made had thrown them into confusion." This light battery was especially directed by the Emperor of Russia in person, who charged in at the head of his Guards. He momentarily gave the command and charge of the service to Lord Cathcart. Nothing could have been served with greater precision and ability than the guns; and after a sharp and continued fire, and a most brilliant resistance, Generals Ariani and Pacthod, generals of division, five brigadiers, 3000 prisoners, 12 guns, and the whole convoy, fell into the hands of the Allies.[1]* Sir Charles Stewart has not told us, but those who were also

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, March 26, 1814, Cast. Cor. ix. 396; Muff. 502, 503; Marm. vi. 236, 237; Thiers, xvii. 566, 567.

* A romantic and melancholy incident, painfully descriptive of the horrors of war, as well as characteristic of the character of Sir Charles Stewart, occurred on this occasion. It is thus narrated by him:—"Being forward in the mêlée I perceived that some of the Cossacks, most probably from Bashkir, had not only secured a French colonel's calèche and baggage, but one of them had seized his wife, whose cries rent the air, and, with the aid of two other Tartars, was placing her behind him. I will not detail the frequent histories of lawless troops, nor add to these pages instances of barbarity, which I fear has been too justly given of the conduct of the Russian predatory hordes in their march

present have, that he was at the head of the charge into the French square, and second to none in the hand-to-hand fight which ensued.*

45. Results of these combats, and advance of the Allies to Paris.

In these combats at Fère-Champenoise the French lost 10,000 men, of whom 7000 were prisoners, 80 guns, 200 ammunition-waggons, and the whole valuable convoy of bread. The victory was gained by cavalry and artillery alone on the side of the Allies; not a musket-shot was fired on their side; and the resistance of the French, including the National Guard, was gallant in the extreme. The number of troops engaged on each side in the two combats was about 22,000, entirely infantry and guns on the side of the French, entirely cavalry and artillery on that of the Russians. These advantages, considerable at any time, were doubly so, as gained over an army already so very inferior to the host which was pursuing them within sixty-five miles of Paris, and with no reserves to fall back upon between them and the capital. The advance

through France. But I reflect with satisfaction that it was my good fortune to rescue, even for a moment, a lovely and most interesting Frenchwoman from the hands of these wild soldiers. Being, however, unable to listen to her afflicting details, and not knowing in what manner better to place her in security, I directed my own orderly hussar, of the King's German Legion, to place her at the moment *en croupe*, and carry her to my billet at headquarters. I was unwilling, and indeed could not at that moment leave the field, and consoled myself with the thought that when I returned to my quarters I should receive the thanks of a beautiful creature, and have the happiness of restoring her to her husband. But, alas! how little can we reckon on any future event, especially in war! The distance between the field of battle and Fère-Champenoise was inconsiderable, the town was in sight, and from the number of officers and troops moving about I could not imagine my beautiful prisoner would be recaptured. But, sad to relate, either the Cossacks returned, or others more savage and determined, and perceiving my faithful orderly hussar and prize, fell upon him, and after nearly killing him re-seized and carried off their victim. And although the strictest investigation was made throughout his whole army by the Emperor of Russia, to whom I immediately repaired and related the melancholy tale, and who heard it with the utmost compassion and interest, the beautiful and interesting Frenchwoman never appeared again."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *March* 27, 1814, *MS.*; and LONDONDERRY, 289. I have heard that mournful story narrated in just the same manner by Lord Burghersh, who bore ample testimony to Sir Charles's generous humanity on this occasion.

* I was informed of this by my lamented friend Lord Burghersh, afterwards Earl of Westmoreland, who also was present on the occasion, and has left so very valuable and interesting a narrative of the campaign.

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of the Allies towards Paris, accordingly, from this time was rapid and unresisted. At four in the morning of the 26th, both armies broke up and marched towards that city — Schwartzenberg on the direct road by Sezanne; Blucher by two roads, his main body along that from Vertus to Montmirail, the detached corps of Kleist and D'York from Chateau-Thierry to La Ferté-Gaucher.* Nothing could exceed the activity with which the pursuit was conducted. The Grand Army advanced with extra-

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ordinary rapidity. On the 26th, headquarters were at Treffaux. The French marshals were now on the verge of total destruction. Worn out and dejected, their men were in no condition to withstand the charges of the numerous and magnificent squadrons of the united Allied armies which were pressing on them; and such had been their losses in guns on the preceding day, that the two corps had only seven pieces left. Kleist and D'York's corps had been detached to La Ferté-Gaucher to head them at that point; and having, by marching with extraordinary rapidity, arrived before them, the retreating marshals, after a sharp combat, in which they lost 1500 prisoners, were forced to abandon the high-road, and hasten across the fields towards Provins by Courtaçon. This achievement of the Army of Silesia was the more remarkable, that the men "who fought at La Ferté-Gaucher," in Sir Charles Stewart's words, "had been at Nismes on the 24th, being a distance of twenty-six leagues." The French marshals were closely pursued on their cross-march by the indefa-

[1] Lond. 292; Burgh. 234; Dan. 321, 322; Plotho, iii. 334; Thiers, xvii. 567-569; Marm. vi. 258.

tigable Pahlen, at the head of great part of the cavalry of the Grand Army, and would have been enveloped and totally destroyed had not the Prince of Wirtemberg, his commanding officer, apprehensive of losing his artillery in crossing the fields, with ill-timed caution called him off, and discontinued the pursuit.[1] †

* The two last had followed Marmont and Mortier to Chateau-Thierry, and were thus now on their flank and rear.

† "Dans notre mouvement de Fismes sur la Marne nous avions été

46. Advance of the Allied armies to Paris. March 27.

After this narrow escape from total ruin, the corps of Marmont and Mortier continued their retrograde movement on Paris, the former by Melun, the latter through Guignes. This movement entirely uncovered the capital, and left the march unopposed to both the Allied armies, who continued their advance without any further serious opposition by La Ferté-sous-Jouarre and Meaux to Paris. A feeble attempt at resistance was made between these two places by a large body of National Guards, with a few old soldiers, but they were speedily routed by General Korff, at the head of some squadrons of cavalry, and their commander made prisoner. The passage of the Marne was effected by the two armies with very little opposition—the Army of Silesia at Trilport, and the Grand Army at Meaux. In the latter town the French, without giving March 28. the inhabitants the slightest warning, blew up an immense powder-magazine, which at once shivered every window in it to atoms. Meanwhile Marmont and Mortier retired with all imaginable rapidity towards Paris, by Mormant and Melun, and crossed the Marne at Charenton, where, being within a few miles of the capital, they fell under the orders of Joseph, intrusted with the chief command there. Although the Allies advanced with the utmost expedition, they were unable to prevent the French from being the first in the race, and establishing themselves on the heights of Montmartre, Belleville, and Romainville, before the Russians or Prussians approached St Denis. Meanwhile the Allies, in great strength, and in the highest March 29. spirits, drew near to Paris, on the direct road from Meaux;

suivis par les corps de Kleist et D'York. De Chateau-Thierry ces deux généraux s'étaient portés directement sur La Ferté-Gaucher pour s'opposer à notre retraite. Notre position était critique; j'en augurais fort mal. Je regardai comme perdue au moins la totalité de notre matériel, et je dis en plaisantant au General Digion, commandant mon artillerie, que le lendemain il serait probablement général d'artillerie *in partibus*. Cependant nous ne négligeames aucun effort pour nous tirer d'affaire, et nous y parvimes. Chose mémorable! Nous sortimes sans aucune perte de la plus horrible situation où jamais troupes étaient placés. Tout arriva intact à Provins, infanterie, cavalerie, artillerie, et equipages."—MARMONT, vi. 238, 239.

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the Prussians chanting Körner's *Lyre and Sword*, the Cossacks singing the airs of the desert. The Imperial and Royal Guards, with the Emperor and King in person, followed the great chaussée from Meaux; Blucher's columns, which moved over the fields, or by the road from Soissons, farther to the right, formed a long dark line on the northern horizon. The two armies had united on the right bank of the Marne, where the Emperor reviewed Sacken's corps, and publicly thanked his men for the gallantry they had displayed since the commencement of the campaign. He might well do so. Their fearfully diminished numbers told but too clearly the dangers they had gone through since they had crossed the Rhine. Out of 20,000 who had passed that stream, only 6000 remained; but though their clothes were worn out, their arms were clean; and their bronzed visages and determined look bespoke at once past service and future triumphs. The Allies were now in a fruitful country, the produce of which amply supplied their wants. Alexander, true to his principles, in imitation of Wellington, issued a noble proclamation to his troops, in which he absolutely forbade plunder or disorders of any description, and enjoined it in the most rigorous manner upon the commanders under him. This order had the effect of immediately bringing supplies of every sort to the Allied camp.[1]*

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, March 29, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 494; Dan. 335, 336; Marm. ii. 239-241; Thiers, xvii. 570, 571.

* "It is the immutable will of his Majesty the Emperor that the troops under your command should observe the strictest discipline, and on no account whatever leave their bivouacs to go into the villages; and that their wants, such as fire, wood, straw, should not be supplied otherwise than through the intervention of the mayors. You cannot but be aware how much the good conduct of our troops in the present circumstances may influence the common cause; and therefore his Majesty will hold you personally responsible for the execution of this order."—ALEXANDER'S *Order, March* 26, 1814; DANILEFSKY, 334.

"At the moment we are approaching Paris, it is only by the strictest subordination among the troops that we can hope to obtain the important results we have in view. You were one of the very first to be convinced of the necessity of gaining over the affections of the inhabitants of Paris to the cause we are maintaining; but shall we be acting on this conviction if the villages around Paris be left a prey to plunderers instead of finding protection from our armies? I earnestly entreat of you to use every possible means to prevent acts of vio-

47. Extreme consternation in Paris.

The whole Allied army had orders to concentrate on the evening of the 29th before Paris, and before sunset on that night they were assembled on the plain around St Denis, on the roads of Soissons, Meaux, and Vincennes, ready on the morrow to commence the attack on the capital. No words can describe the consternation of its inhabitants, when the distant booming of the cannon told that the enemy was approaching, and crowds of peasants, driving their horses and cattle before them, flocked into the city, giving the most alarming accounts of the countless host of barbarians which was chasing them forward, and advancing to destroy, as they thought, the great capital with fire and sword. Multitudes of these unfortunate panic-struck peasants soon filled the city, adding by their lamentations to the terror which universally prevailed. The alarm was even greater at the Tuileries than elsewhere, for they could measure the real extent of the danger, and were not deceived by the report, sedulously spread among the people, that the Emperor with a powerful army was fast following on the track of the barbarians, and would speedily overtake and exterminate them. The Empress was in the utmost agony, and spent most of her time in tears. She knew not whom to trust or to whom to turn in her distress. Joseph, who was intrusted with the command of Paris by order of the Emperor, had not firmness of mind or energy of character equal to the emergency, and, seeing the thrones of his family crumbling around him, had come to despair of the fortunes of the empire. Clarke, the Minister of War, overwhelmed by the orders of the Emperor, which he had no means of executing, was wholly unable to sustain the burden of his office. Savary, Minister of Police, was so detested, from the vigour with which he

lence. Every commander of a corps or detachment should be made personally responsible for whatever disorders may be committed. Your active exertions on this occasion will secure you the general gratitude, and double the high respect I entertain for you."—ALEXANDER *to* MARSHAL COUNT WREDE, *March* 26, 1814; DANILEFSKY, 334, 335.

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had executed his odious office, that he had no influence whatever; and Talleyrand, the remaining member of the Empress's council, kept aloof, and, without himself suggesting anything, contented himself with cutting and disdainful remarks upon anything suggested by others. The distress of the Empress was much enhanced by a dream of the King of Rome, of a melancholy cast, of which, with infantine simplicity, he told his mother, but without informing her of its details.* Not an additional soldier, or gun, or horse could be got to defend, in its last extremity, the Palladium of the empire: and at this moment 100,000 veteran soldiers were shut up in useless inactivity in Dantzic, Hamburg, Flushing, Palma Nuova, Venice, Alessandria, Antwerp, and the fortresses on the Rhine. A memorable example of the way in which ambition, as Shakespeare says, "overleaps itself, and falls on the other side," and of the provision made by Providence for the destruction of all attempts to attain universal dominion in the efforts which it makes for its own extension.[1]

[1] Lond. 297; Thiers, xvii. 572-574; Dan. 334-336; Lab. ii. 349; Beauch. ii. 194.

48. It is determined that the Empress and King of Rome should go beyond the Loire. March 28.

The near approach of the Allied armies, however, and the evident danger of the Empress and King of Rome falling into the enemy's hands, rendered it absolutely necessary to come to some decision as to their disposal during the perils evidently about to arrive. A council, accordingly, was called to take the matter into consideration on the evening of the 28th, which was attended by all the members of her Privy Council and the principal dignitaries of the empire. In it opinions, as might have been expected in such a crisis, were very much divided as to the course which should be pursued. The Minister at

* "A very interesting intercepted letter has been shown to me from the Empress to Buonaparte, in which, after expressing great affection, she states the effect which his late victories had produced at Paris, and ending by an anecdote of the King of Rome having had a dream, in which he cried bitterly, calling frequently on his papa. When he awoke, and was questioned as to the cause, no entreaty or threat could induce him to give the smallest explanation or reveal the nature of his dream. This made the child very melancholy, and the Empress partook of it, though she rode daily to the Bois de Boulogne."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *March* 27, 1814, *MS.*

War began the discussion by unfolding the forces on which they could rely for their defence, and those of the Allies; these last he estimated at 150,000 men, while their own did not exceed 25,000. In these circumstances he with reason concluded that he could not answer for the safety of the Empress and her son if they remained in Paris, and that the only question was, whither they should be conveyed? Upon this a strong debate arose in the Council. Boulay de la Meurthe, an old republican, proposed that they should convey the Empress to the Hôtel de Ville, sound the tocsin in all the churches, arm and call forth the inhabitants of the faubourg, show the infant to them at the windows of the building, and electrify the citizens by exhibiting the heroism of Maria Theresa. Count Molé strongly combated the removal of the Empress, alleging, what the event proved was true, that "the greatest of all errors, if resistance was determined on, would be to leave Paris without a government; for, if left to themselves, its inhabitants would speedily abandon the Emperor." In this opinion Talleyrand concurred. Clarke, on the other hand, supported the removal of the Empress, insisting "that it was a mistake to consider Paris as the centre of the imperial power; that the authority of the Emperor would follow him everywhere; and as long as a village remained in France unoccupied by the enemy, that would be his capital." Upon the vote being taken, twenty-three declared for making the contest a popular one, and removing the Empress and her infant son to the Hôtel de Ville. Upon this, Joseph produced a letter from the Emperor, dated from Rheims not a fortnight before, to the effect that in no event should they permit the Empress and the King of Rome to fall into the hands of the enemy; that if the Allies approached Paris with forces plainly irresistible, they should remove them, along with the chief dignitaries of the empire, to the south of the Loire; in fine, that he would rather see his son in the Seine than in the hands of the Allies.[1] This

[1] Thiers, xvii. 578, 582; Savary, vi. 344, 345; Thib. ix. 617, 618.

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at once terminated the discussion, and it was determined that Joseph should remain to provide, as long as possible, for the defence of the capital, and that the Empress and King of Rome should be removed next day in the direction of the Loire.*

49. Departure of the Empress and King of Rome for the Loire. March 29.

Departure being thus resolved on, the Empress, though with undisguised reluctance, prepared to obey it; and early next morning the Place of the Carrousel was filled with carriages to convey the august fugitives to a place of safety. In addition to the Imperial family and their suite and the dignitaries of the empire, designed by Napoleon to accompany her, there were put in the conveyance the most secret and precious papers of the Emperor, and the remains of his private treasure, amounting to 1,800,000 francs (£720,000), with the whole crown diamonds. The Empress was in tears all the forenoon, and her grief was much aggravated by the King of Rome, who, though only three years of age, evinced the utmost reluctance to quit the palace, clung with such energy to the curtains of his apartment that he had to be torn away by force, and repeatedly asked, as they were carrying him down the great stair, why they were taking him away, whither he was going? An anxious and agitated crowd, from an early hour, filled the Carrousel, and opinions were much and painfully divided as to what was going forward. Some, seeing the Imperial family about to depart and the chief officers of Government with them, gave over the cause as lost, and openly expressed their

* "You are in no event to permit the Empress and the King of Rome to fall into the enemy's hands; and I am about to manœuvre in such a manner that you may possibly be several days without hearing from me. Should the enemy advance upon Paris with such forces as to render resistance plainly impossible, send off in the direction of the Loire the Empress and the King of Rome, the great dignitaries, the ministers, the president of the council of state, the officers of the senate, the great officers of the crown, and the treasure. Never quit my son; and keep in mind, I would rather see him in the Seine than in the hands of the enemies of France. The fate of Astyanax, a prisoner in the hands of the Greeks, has always appeared to me the most deplorable in history."—NAPOLEON *to* JOSEPH, *Rheims, March* 16, 1814; CAPEFIGUE, x. 443, 444.

joy that at least the Empress and her son would be extricated from the dangers which were impending over them. Others, and they were the more numerous, loudly blamed the departure as an act of pusillanimity which would ruin the cause of France, and insisted that they should have remained, and thrown themselves on the people, who would have defended them with their lives. In the midst of these anxieties and fears, the Empress and her august infant appeared at the foot of the stair, and entered the carriages. Every head was uncovered, and hardly an eye was dry in the immense assemblage; but not a cheer was given and not a sound was heard, as on days of festivity, as they took their departure. Silently they slowly moved away, followed by tearful eyes, as if led out to execution. They were taking their last farewell. Neither was ever seen in Paris again.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 583-585; Sav. vii. 1-3; Thib. ix. 618, 619; Cap. x. 442, 443.

50. Treacherous conduct of Talleyrand.

One high dignitary and arch-traitor was sadly perplexed how to act on this occasion. As arch-chancellor and one of the chief officers of state, it was the obvious duty of Talleyrand to have obeyed the Emperor's orders and accompanied the Empress in her retreat. But that by no means suited the views of the hoary diplomatist, who, having come to despair of the Emperor's cause, was meditating a desertion to the other side, and was already in secret communication with the Emperor Alexander, whom he expected as his guest in Paris on his arrival, looked for on the following day. But how was he to avoid going off with the Empress, and then being honourably dragged down the gulf by her? The device, eminently characteristic of the man, which he fell upon was this: Pretending to have much to carry away and arrange, he contrived to delay his departure till the Imperial cortège was already off, and then set out, as if to follow them, in great pomp, attended by a numerous train. Meanwhile he had arranged with the police that he should be stopped at the barrier for want of a passport, which he took care not to have with him. After much

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seeming altercation and many expressions of regret, he returned to his hôtel late in the evening, and made *no attempt to set out again.* Two days after he received the Russian Emperor as his guest in his magnificent hotel in the Rue Florentin, where the dethronement of Napoleon was arranged.[1] *

1 Thiers, xvii. 611, 612.

51. Forces of the French for the defence of Paris.

Left in this manner to their own resources, Joseph, Marmont, and Mortier made the best dispositions that circumstances would admit to maintain their ground against the overwhelming superiority of force by which they were assailed. The defence of the important heights of Belleville and Romainville, the true bulwark of the capital, and from thence to Charenton, on the Marne, was intrusted to Marmont; that from those heights to the Seine, including Montmartre, was devolved upon Mortier. The line was by nature extremely strong, and if it had been either strengthened by adequate field-works or defended by a sufficient force, it might have been rendered altogether impregnable. But it had no intrenchments, and the force by which it was guarded was altogether inadequate to the defence of so extensive a position. Marmont's corps, which was placed during the night at Saint Maude and Charenton, even when it was all assembled, amounted only to 7500 infantry and 1500 horse, the remains of *seventy battalions* of which it had been composed.[2] The wreck of *fifteen divisions*, which in former days would have mustered 90,000 combatants,

2 Marm. vi. 241.

* "Ne sachant comment faire pour couvrir d'un prétexte spécieux sa présence prolongée à Paris, M. de Talleyrand prit le parti de monter en voiture pour feindre au moins la bonne volonté de suivre la Régente. Vers la chute du jour, à l'heure où finissait le combat, il se présenta, *sans passe-port et en grand appareil de voyage*, à la barrière qui donnait sur la route d'Orléans. Elle était occupée par des gardes nationaux fort irrités contre ceux qui depuis deux jours désertaient la capitale. Il se fit autour de sa voiture une sorte de tumulte, naturel selon quelques contemporains, et selon d'autres préparé à dessein. On lui demanda son passe-port qu'il ne put montrer; on murmura contre ce défaut d'une formalité essentielle, et alors, avec une déférence affectée pour la consigne des braves défenseurs de Paris, il rebrossa chemin et rentra dans san hôtel. La plupart de ceux qui avaient contribué à le retenir, et qui ne désiraient pas de revolution, ne se doutaient pas qu'ils avaient retenu l'homme qui allait en faire une."—THIERS, xvii. 612.

stood on the line of defence, but, including 4000 National Guards who were capable of taking the field, they produced only 28,000 men.* They had the advantage, however, of a very strong position, intersected by woods, villages, and wall-enclosures, and they had 150 pieces of cannon. The troops took their ground before daylight, on the morning of the 29th, with regularity and precision; they were resolved to combat to the uttermost, but they knew the enemy with which they had to contend, and did so with the mournful conviction that it would be in vain.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 585, 586; Marm. vi. 240; Koch, iii. 449, 450; Dan. 347; Vaud. ii. 310.

52. Forces of the Allies, and their plan of attack.

The forces of the Allies, taken as a whole, were infinitely superior; they had nearly 200,000 men in all around their banners. It may readily be believed, however, that of this immense force, a small part only was actually in the front, and prepared to take a part in the action.† Even that portion, however, was greatly more numerous than their opponents, and they were supported by the consciousness that victory was certain, because an overwhelming force, if necessary, could be brought up to reinforce them. The plan of attack was as follows: On the Allied right the Army of Silesia was to advance to the attack of Montmartre on two sides, one on that of Clichy and St Denis, the other on that of La Vilette and La Chapelle; while the Grand Army moved in the centre and on the left, directing its main column on the heights of Pantin, Romainville, and Chaumont, and sending a flanking one by the wood of Vincennes round to Charenton, on the Marne. Nearly 100,000 men in all were told off for the attack;[2] but a great part of them were far removed

[2] Muff. 507.

* The actual number of troops on paper disposable for the defence of Paris was 30,546, independent of 1970 in garrison in Vincennes, Charenton, St Denis, &c. This includes, however, 6000 National Guard, of whom not 4000 ever came up; and after deducting the detachments necessarily left to guard the city and barriers, the sick, &c., about 23,000 or 24,000 regular troops and 4000 National Guard—28,000 in all—were actually brought under fire.—*See* MARMONT, vi. 356, and THIERS, xvii. 591.

† They had, detached to the rear, Winzingerode observing Napoleon; Bulow blockading Soissons, and guarding the communication with Belgium; and Wrede and Sacken, at Meaux, watching the bridges over the Marne.

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in the morning from the scene of action, and did not come up till late in the afternoon. The weight of the contest till then fell on Barclay's and Raeffskoi's corps in the centre, which were not above 45,000 strong. Thence the long duration and extremely bloody nature of the conflict, which, if the troops had been all up at once, could not have lasted two hours, or cost half the men. It was not without reason, however, deemed indispensable to commence an attack as early as possible with the troops already in hand, as it was known that the Emperor of France was hastening on their footsteps; and if the battle were prolonged for any considerable time, it was feared he might appear with fatal effect on their left flank. Joseph, on the evening of the 29th, issued an animated proclamation to the inhabitants of Paris, and Schwartzenberg two days afterwards published a remarkable one, embodying Lord Castlereagh's views, and descriptive of the principles of the Allied sovereigns in advancing to the final conflict.[1] *

[1] Dan. 348, 349; Burgh. 237, 238; Koch, iii. 451; Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, March 30, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 412, 413.

* Joseph's proclamation was in these terms: "Citizens of Paris! A column of the enemy has advanced to Meaux. It approaches by the road of Germany; but the Emperor follows it closely at the head of a victorious army. The Council of the Regency has provided for the safety of the Empress and the King of Rome. I remain with you. Let us arm to defend our capital, its monuments, its riches, our wives, our children, all that is dear to us. Let this great city become a camp for a few moments; and let the enemy find his shame under those walls which he hopes to pass in triumph. The Emperor marches to our succour: second him by a brief and vigorous resistance, and we shall preserve the honour of France."—*Moniteur, March* 29, 1814.

Schwartzenberg's proclamation was as follows: "Inhabitants of Paris! The Allied armies are under your walls. The object of their march to the capital of France is founded on the hope of a sincere and lasting pacification with her. For twenty years Europe has been deluged with blood and tears. Every attempt to put a stop to these calamities has proved vain; for this reason, that in the very government that oppresses you, there has been found an invincible obstacle to peace. Who among you is not convinced of this truth? The Allied sovereigns desire to find in France a beneficent government which shall strengthen her alliance with all nations; and therefore, in the present circumstances, it is the duty of Paris to hasten the general pacification. We await the expression of your opinion with a degree of impatience, proportioned to the mighty consequences which must result from your determination. Declare it: and you shall at once find defenders in the armies standing before your walls. Parisians! the state of France, the proceedings of the inhabitants of Bordeaux, the peaceful occupation of Lyons, and the real sentiments of your countrymen, are known to you. In these examples

Sir Charles Stewart, who took an active part in the battle which followed, gave the following graphic and interesting account of it in his letter to Lord Castlereagh: "The 6th corps, under General Raeffskoi, moved from Bondy at six in the morning in three columns of attack, supported by the Guards and reserves, and, leaving the great route of Meaux, attacked the heights of Romainville and Belleville. These are very commanding, as well as Montmartre. The ground between them is covered with villages and country-seats; and the possession of the high grounds commands Paris and all around them. Prince Eugene of Wirtemberg's division of the 6th corps commenced the attack, and, with the greatest spirit, endured for a long period a very galling fire of artillery, supported by the reserves of grenadiers. He, after some loss, carried the heights of Romainville, the enemy retiring to those of Belleville behind them. The 4th corps supported this attack more to the left, and was directed on the heights of Rosny and on Charenton. The 3d corps of the army was placed in *échelon* near Neuilly in reserve, as well as the cavalry. The attack of the Grand Army had commenced some short period before, that of the Silesian Army being delayed by some accident. But it was not long before York and Kleist debouched near St Denis on Auberville, and here and at Pantin a very obstinate resistance was made. His Royal Highness Prince William of Prussia, with his brigade, together with the Prussian Guards, was much distinguished. The enemy's cavalry attempted to charge, but were brilliantly repulsed by the Brandenburg and black hussar regiments. A strong redoubt and battery of the enemy's in their centre kept General York's corps in check for some part of the

53. Battle of Paris. March 30.

you will find the end of war and of domestic discord: it is to be found nowhere else. The preservation of your city and your tranquillity shall be the object of the prudent measures which the Allies will not fail to take, in concert with such of your authorities as enjoy the general confidence. Troops shall not be quartered upon you. Such are the sentiments with which Europe, arrayed before your walls, now addresses you. Hasten to justify her confidence in your patriotism and prudence."—*Moniteur, March* 31, 1814.

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day; but, their right flank being gained by the heights of Romainville, as well as their loss in every part of the field, and finally their complete discomfiture at every point, reduced them to the necessity of sending a flag of truce to demand a cessation of hostilities, they giving up all the ground without the barriers of Paris until future arrangements could be made. The heights of Montmartre were to be placed, by the generosity of a beaten enemy, in our possession; Romainville and Belleville being carried at the moment when Count Langeron's corps were about to storm and had already taken possession of the crest of the hill, and when Count Woronzow's division also carried the town of La Vilatte, charging with two battalions of chasseurs, and possessed themselves of twelve pieces of cannon, when they were also stopped, near the barrier of Paris, by the flag of truce. His Imperial Majesty and Prince Schwartzenberg acceded to an arrangement to save the capital from being sacked and destroyed."[1]

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, March 30, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 412-414.

54. Results of the battle.

The military trophies of this battle were very great. Sixty-nine guns were taken, and the entire line of defence commanding Paris fell into the hands of the Allies. The defence was most gallant, and in the highest degree honourable to the French arms; for 24,000 regular troops, feebly supported by a few National Guards, combated and kept at bay during ten hours, between 50,000 and 60,000 assailants actually brought under fire. But these material results, considerable as they were, bore no comparison to the political and moral consequences, which were far more important. They were nothing less than the dethronement of Napoleon and termination of the war. The terms agreed on between the Emperor Alexander and Marshal Marmont were, that the French were to evacuate Paris that night, and immediately withdraw within the barriers. This was accordingly done, and every preparation was directly commenced for a triumphant entry on the following day. In the night the municipality of Paris, followed closely by M. de Caulaincourt, came out to the Allied headquarters, and were

kindly received by the Emperor of Russia at Bondy. Caulaincourt, in an interview with him, which will be detailed hereafter, offered on the spot to sign the Chatillon *projet* or any one that was presented to him; but although Schwartzenberg also saw him, he was unable to effect any accommodation. During the night the evacuation of the capital by the French was completed, and the Guards, cuirassiers, and chosen troops of the Allies, were brought up close to the barriers of St Martin and St Denis to grace the entry of the sovereigns on the following day. The loss in the battle of Paris on the part of the Allies was very severe, and double that of the French —a singular circumstance, but by no means unexampled with a victorious army. It amounted to 9093 men, of whom no less than 7500 were Russians—a circumstance which clearly proved with whom the weight of the contest had rested, and to whom its principal honour is due. The severity of this loss arose from the Allied columns coming up in succession, and not together, and Raeffskoi in the centre being so long unsupported; so that for the greater part of the day the numbers actually engaged were nearly equal.[1] *

[1] Lond. 299, 300; Dan. 371; Plotho, iii. 416, 417; Koch, iii. 486.

* "Caulaincourt was at Paris when the battle was fought, and came out on the following day early to the Emperor of Russia at Bondy, with the deputation from the municipality, who came to make arrangements for the occupation of the town. I am sorry that the Emperor received him, but at the interview Caulaincourt declared he would sign the Chatillon *projet* or any other *sur le champ*. No answer was given him. Prince Schwartzenberg afterwards saw him; he declared he did not come in the capacity of Minister of Foreign Affairs, but as one of the municipality of Paris. It seems that Talleyrand, who is personally his friend, has been labouring the point to keep him with the party of the new Government, and to make him remain in Paris. I trust he will neither succeed nor be allowed; for, however he may be amiable and well-meaning for peace, supposing he would even desert Napoleon, still there is so much ignominy attached to his name that his presence in any Government under Louis XVIII. would do much more evil than good. I heard last night that he had resolutely *resisted Talleyrand's offers and entreaties to remain, and was to leave Paris.* But I saw him myself last night: I hinted to him that I should like to send a courier by Calais; but I received no encouragement. I understand, so much does Caulaincourt despair of the possibility of Napoleon's return, that he sounded the Duke d'Albert and Talleyrand as to what the Allies intended as to his future lot, for he was a lost man. Caulaincourt is still in Paris, *and was closeted with the Emperor Alexander until four this morning;* but I am positively informed he goes off to-night."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* LORD BATHURST, *Paris, April* 1, 1814, *MS.*

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55. Entry of the Allies into Paris. March 31.

All things being in readiness, and the Allied Guards having cleaned their arms and put on their gala dresses, which had been kept fresh in their haversacks for the triumph which was approaching, the procession moved forward for the capital. The following account of it was written next day by Sir Charles Stewart, who was in the Imperial cortege, and formed part of the magnificent pageant: "The cavalry, under his Imperial Highness the Grand-duke Constantine, and the Guards of all the different Allied forces, were formed in columns early in the morning on the road from Bondy to Paris. The Emperor of Russia, with all his staff, generals, and suite, proceeded to Pantin, where the King of Prussia joined him with a similar cortege. These sovereigns, surrounded by all the Princes in the army, together with the Prince Field-Marshal and the Austrian Etat-Major, passed through the Faubourg St Martin, and entered the barrier of Paris about eleven o'clock, the Cossacks of the Guard forming the advance of the march. Already was the crowd so enormous, as well as the acclamations so great, that it was difficult to move forward; but, before the monarchs reached the Porte St Martin, there was, to those on the Boulevards, a moral impossibility of proceeding. All Paris seemed to be assembled and concentred on one spot. One animus, one spring, evidently directed all their movements. They thronged in such masses round the Emperor and the King, that with all their condescending and gracious familiarity, extending their hands on all sides, it was in vain to attempt to satisfy the populace; they were positively devoured amidst the cries of 'Vive l'Empereur Alexandre!' 'Vive le Roi de Prusse!' 'Vivent les Rois libérateurs!' Nor did the air alone resound with these peals; for, with louder acclamations, if possible, they were mingled with those of 'Vive le Roi!' 'Vive Louis XVIII.!' 'Vivent les Bourbons!' 'A bas le tyran!' The white cockade appeared universally. Many of the National Guards whom I saw wore them.

The clamorous applause of the multitude was seconded by a similar demonstration from all the houses along the line to the Champs-Elysées, and the waving of handkerchiefs, as well as the fair hands which waved them, seemed in continual requisition. In short, my Lord, to have an idea of such a manifestation of electric feeling as Paris displayed, it must have been witnessed. No description can give a conception of it. The sovereigns halted in the Champs-Elysées, where the troops defiled before them in the most admirable order, and the headquarters were established in Paris." [1] *

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, April 1, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 419-421.

56. Sincerity of the feelings of the Parisians on this occasion.

Strange as it may appear to those to whom the subsequent history of France is known, there can be no doubt that the transports of joy displayed by the Parisians on this occasion were not only all but universal, but perfectly sincere. Lord Burghersh, who was also present on the occasion, gives exactly the same account of the scene; and an authority who cannot be suspected, Savary, Minister of Police, confirms it in every particular. † The author himself, who, though not present on this

* The English who entered Paris on this occasion with the Allied sovereigns were the Earl of Cathcart, the Honourable George Cathcart, Lord Burghersh, Sir Charles Stewart, Sir Hudson Lowe, Colonel H. Cooke, the Honourable Major F. Cathcart, Captain Wood, Lieutenant Aubin, Lieutenant Harris (who brought the despatches to England), Thomas Sydenham, Esq., John Bidwell, Esq., and Dr Frank.—BURGHERSH, 254, *note*.

† "Il y avait une foule innombrable pour voir l'entrée de l'armée Russe. La curiosité en avait réuni la majeure partie: l'indignation avait assemblé l'autre. La classe qui avait été jusqu'alors insignifiante dans la société rompit le frein qui bindait les haines particulières. On vit des femmes, et même des femmes titrées, sortir des bornes du respect qu'elles se devaient à elles-même pour se livrer en public à l'exaltation du délire le plus honteux. On es vit se jeter au travers les chevaux des groupes qui accompagnait l'Empereur de Russie, et lui témoigner une empressement plus propre à attirer le mépris qu'à concilier la bienveillance. On en vit d'autres qui ne vivaient que de des bontés de l'Empereur courir les rues en calèche ameutant le peuple, et lançant des imprecations contre celui dont elles n'avaient cessé d'éprouver les bienfaits. Enfin on en vit dont le deuil était à peine expiré et dont les larmes auraient du couler encore, s'offrir en spectacle à triomphe et y paraître avec des bouquets de myrte et de lauriers qu'elles jetaient sous les pieds des chevaux au lieu de chercher parmi une population indignée des vengeurs de leurs maris; elles employerent guislandes des couronnes pour ceux qui avaient arraché la vie à ces infortunés les fleurs dont elles devaient orner leur tombe." —SAVARY, *Mémoires*, vii. 52.

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memorable day, arrived in Paris shortly after, and resided there for the next three months, repeatedly witnessed similar ebullitions of public feeling, especially when the Allied sovereigns appeared at reviews, theatres, or other public spectacles, such as to leave no doubt whatever of the sincerity and generality of these sentiments. They seemed, indeed, to pervade the entire population. Surprising as this must appear to those who reflect on the subsequent events at Paris, and the general obloquy to which the Holy Alliance and the Bourbons were exposed, it cannot, on reflection, be considered unnatural; and probably any other people in similar circumstances would have done the same. Certain it is that the English, at the Restoration, which overturned the whole aspirations of the great rebellion which had convulsed the nation during the previous twenty years, had done the same. *Deliverance from evil* was in both cases the universal feeling; and this thankfulness, when strongly excited by recent and manifest danger, is always found to be so strong and overpowering as for a time to obliterate every other feeling. It is like the transports of those who have just been rescued from shipwreck or snatched from the flames which were consuming their dwelling. Such had been the dangers in which the ambition and unbending character of Napoleon had for years involved the country, and such the devastation and mourning which they had spread through almost every family, that his fall was almost universally felt to be deliverance from death or ruin. This, and not disaffection or treachery to the country, it was, which, with the great majority, occasioned the transports so universally manifested. The bitterness of subjugation was not felt till the danger had passed away, and then it came with the greater anguish that it had at first been suppressed by still stronger emotions. For those who had been elevated to greatness by the Emperor or fed by his bounty, it is not so easy to find a similar excuse.

After the review was over, Alexander and the King of Prussia rode to the Rue Florentin, where they alighted at the hotel of M. Talleyrand, where the Emperor and King took up their residence *incognito*. The fact of their at once going there was decisive as to the part which that astute and wary diplomatist had been playing for some time in the councils of his sovereign. A few of the leading characters, especially among the Royalists then in Paris, were already there: besides Talleyrand, Baron Louis, the Abbé de Pradt, the Duc de Dalberg, M. Bourrienne, formerly Napoleon's private secretary, the senator Bournonville. To these were added, when the Imperial cortege arrived, the Emperor Alexander, the King of Prussia, Prince Schwartzenberg, Prince Lichtenstein, Count Nesselrode, and Count Pozzo di Borgo. To this small assembly, so variously constituted, was devolved the most arduous and important duty to which men could be called, that of deliberating on the destiny of France, and making arrangements for the pacification of Europe after the waves of the tempest had fallen.[1]

57. Meeting at M. Talleyrand's.

1 De Pradt, Hist. de la Restauration, 13, 14; Thib. ix. 640, 641.

The Emperor of Russia opened the discussion by stating that four courses were now open to them: they might either make peace with Napoleon, taking the necessary securities against him; or establish a regency; or appoint Bernadotte; or recall the Bourbons. Upon these questions he requested the opinions of the meeting, declaring, at the same time, that the Allied sovereigns had no wish but to secure the peace of the world and consult the wishes of France. Talleyrand immediately rose and strongly urged that the three first proposals were utterly inadmissible, and that there could be no peace for the world while Napoleon *or any of his family* was on the throne. He concluded by urging that the only course left was to adopt the fourth alternative, and, by re-establishing the sway of a mild and pacific race of sovereigns, afford at once peace to France and security to Europe. Schwartzenberg combated these ideas, and supported the project of a regency. He ob-

58. Discussion, which ended in the dethronement of Napoleon.

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served that he had seen no indications of indifference to Napoleon during his march through France; that the declarations in favour of the Bourbons had been few and far between; and that the heroic resistance of the National Guard at Fère-Champenoise only a few days ago gave no indication of such a disposition. Alexander then, turning to Talleyrand, asked how he proposed to arrive at his object, to which the latter replied, By means of the constituted authorities; that he would engage for the Senate, and their example would speedily be followed by all France. In this opinion Baron Louis and the Abbé de Pradt strongly concurred, adding that they were decided Royalists, and the great majority of the French were of the same opinion, and that it was the knowledge that the Allied sovereigns were treating at Chatillon with Napoleon which alone had prevented them from making public declarations to that effect. Alexander, upon this, said, that though naturally inclined to support the Bourbons, the Allied sovereigns feared their ability to govern France as it now stood; that the government of a woman and her infant son was equally inadmissible, and for the same reason; that, actuated by these feelings, *he had sometimes thought of Bernadotte,* but that, finding little concurrence in that opinion, he had ceased to press it, and that, in these circumstances, the desire of the sovereigns was to yield to the wishes of France. "Sire," resumed Talleyrand upon this, "there are but two courses open to us: Buonaparte or the Bourbons. Buonaparte, if you can, —but it is no longer in your power. Whom would you give us in his place? A soldier? We want none of them. If we desired one, we could keep the one we already have; he is the first in the world. After him any one that could be offered would not have ten votes in his favour. I repeat it, Sire! any attempt to create a regency, or appoint Bernadotte, is a mere intrigue: nothing remains but Buonaparte or the Bourbons."[1] "Well, then," said Alexander, "I declare I will no longer treat with the Emperor

[1] De Pradt, 18-24; Thiers, xvii. 639-648; Sav. vii. 53-55.

Napoleon." "*Nor with any of his family,*" was immediately added by the Abbé de Pradt, and generally assented to. A proclamation to that effect was immediately drawn up and placarded over Paris the same afternoon.*

59. Dethronement of Napoleon by the Senate, and appointment of a provisional government.

The die being now cast, nothing remained but to follow up the blow with the utmost rapidity, and get the dethronement of the Emperor completed before he could return at the head of his troops to the neighbourhood of Paris. The principal authors of the movement were not slow in proceeding with the necessary measures to effect this object. On the same evening a proclamation was drawn up, ordering the liberation of all persons confined in prison for "state offences, or on account of their attachment to their ancient and legitimate sovereign." Some apprehensions were expressed that no printer could be found bold enough to throw off these proclamations; but Talleyrand had foreseen and provided for this difficulty, and a printer and printing-press were already in the hotel, by which five hundred copies were thrown off and placarded over Paris that night; while, by means of the post-office, of which he got the command by order of Alexander, it was next morning circulated over all France. Talleyrand, in his official character of arch-chancellor of the empire, summoned the senators to meet in their usual hall at 8 A.M. on 1st April; but, though several of their number were initiated in what was in contemplation, the

* "The Allied Powers having occupied Paris, they are ready to receive the declaration of the French nation. They declare, that if it was indispensable that the conditions of peace should contain stronger guarantees when it was necessary to restrain the ambition of Napoleon, they would become more favourable when, by a return to a wiser government, France itself offers them a guarantee for repose. The Allied sovereigns declare in consequence, that they will no longer treat *with Napoleon nor any of his family*, but they respect the integrity of old France as it existed under its legitimate kings. They may even go farther, for they have always professed the principle that it is for the happiness of Europe that France should be great and powerful, and that they will recognise and guarantee such a constitution as the French nation may give itself. They invite, consequently, the Senate to appoint a provisional government which may provide for the immediate necessities of administration, and establish such a constitution as may be fitting to the French people. These sentiments are common to me with all the Allied Powers.—ALEXANDER." —*Moniteur, April* 1, 1814.

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greater number were not, and in consequence, out of one hundred and forty of which the body consisted, only sixty-four obeyed the summons, and they came with reluctant and faltering steps and pale visages to the place of assembly. Such as they were, however, they presented a strange assembly of men of the most opposite and apparently irreconcilable parties, whom a sense of common and overwhelming danger had brought together! For, beside Garat, the Abbé Gregoire, Lambrecht, and Lanjuinais, who recalled the stormy days of the Convention, were to be seen De Tracy, Fontanes, the eloquent orator of the empire, the Abbé de Montesquiou, Roger Ducos, Bourdesoules, and Marshal the Duc de Valmy and Serrurier! Talleyrand opened the proceedings; and the necessity of the case being apparent, there was no debate, and very little discussion. A provisional government was unanimously appointed, consisting of Talleyrand, who was president, the Comte de Beurnonville, the Comte de Jaucourt, the Duc de Dalberg, and M. de Montesquiou, who had been a leading member of the Constituent Assembly in 1789. Nothing was said of Napoleon, probably to afford a pretext for holding out, if he re-established his affairs, that the whole was done under the pressure of necessity, and in order to preserve the authority for him. Though nothing was said of Napoleon, however, something was said *of themselves*. They provided that "the Senate and Legislative Body should form part of the new government; that their rank and pensions should be preserved to the army; the sale of the national domains ratified; a general amnesty declared for the past; liberty of worship and the press established; and a constitution on these bases formed." Great care was taken in this manner of the *interests* created by the Revolution; nothing done to secure its principles.[1]

[1] Moniteur, April 1 and 2, 1814.

On the afternoon of the next day, the Senate waited in a body on the Emperor Alexander, at M. Talleyrand's hotel. He received them in the most courteous manner,

60. Alexander's noble speech to the Senate. April 2.

and with that suavity and charm of address which was peculiarly his own, and won the hearts of all who approached him. "Gentlemen," said he, "I am charmed to find myself in the midst of you. It is neither ambition nor the love of conquest which has led me hither; my armies have only entered France to repel unjust aggression. Your Emperor carried war into the heart of my dominions, when I only wished for peace. I am the friend of the French people; I impute their faults to their chief alone; I am here with the most friendly intentions; I wish only to protect your deliberations. You are charged with one of the most glorious missions which generous men can discharge,—that of securing the happiness of a great people, in giving France institutions *at once strong and liberal*, with which she cannot dispense in the advanced state of civilisation to which she has attained. I set out to-morrow to resume the command of the armies, and sustain the cause which you have embraced: it is time that blood should cease to flow; too much has been shed already: my heart grieves for it. I shall not lay down my arms till I have secured the peace which is the object of all my efforts. I shall be content if, on leaving your country, I carry with me the satisfaction of having had it in my power to be useful to you, and to contribute to the peace of the world. The provisional government has asked me this morning for the liberation of the French prisoners of war confined in Russia: I gladly give it to the Senate. Since they fell into my hands I have done all in my power to soften their lot. I shall immediately give orders for their liberation: may they rejoin their families in peace, and enjoy the happiness which the new order of things is fitted to induce." Loud applause followed these noble words: it was no wonder it was so. A hundred and fifty thousand men were by them at once rescued from captivity, and restored to their families and country! Such was the vengeance which Alexander took for the devastation of Russia, and the flames of Moscow![1]

[1] Moniteur, April 3, 1814; Beauch. ii. 326, 327.

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61! Dethronement of the Emperor.

The same evening the Senate, now irrecoverably committed by a solemn decree, dethroned the Emperor, and absolved the people and army from their oaths of allegiance.* This decisive step was moved in an impassioned speech by Lambrecht; and the act of accusation was prepared by Barbé-Marbois, Lanjuinais, and *Fontanes*, whose eloquent periods had so often resounded with the glories of the empire! It abounded in the most severe and cutting invectives against the Imperial Government, the truth of which has now been abundantly verified by experience. The Legislative Body adhered, in a meeting attended by seventy-seven members, to the act of the Senate, and absolved the people and army from their oaths of allegiance to the fallen warrior. Adhesions now rapidly poured in on all sides to the new government, though the name of the Bourbons had not as yet been mentioned. The municipality of Paris, and all the public bodies of the capital, vied with each other in presenting addresses, in which they exhausted all the powers of rhetoric in vilifying the Emperor, as they had formerly done in extolling him.

* "Soldiers! France has broken the yoke beneath which she has groaned for so many years! You have never fought save for your country: you can now no longer combat but against her, under the standards of the man who has hitherto conducted you. See what you have suffered from his tyranny: you were once a million of soldiers; almost all have perished under the sword of the enemy; or, without subsistence, without hospitals, they have been doomed to die of misery and famine. You are no longer the soldiers of Napoleon; the Senate and people of entire France absolve you from your oaths."—*Moniteur, April 5*, 1814.

To the people of France they addressed this proclamation:—

"Frenchmen! On emerging from civil disunion you chose for chief a man who appeared on the theatre of the world with an air of grandeur. You reposed in him all your hopes; these hopes have been deceived: on the ruins of anarchy he has founded only despotism. He was bound at least to have become a Frenchman with you; he has not done so. He has never ceased to undertake, without end or motive, unjust wars, like an adventurer who is impelled by the thirst for glory. In a few years he has devoured at once your riches and your sons. Every family is in mourning; all France groans: but he is deaf to our calamities. Possibly he still dreams of gigantic designs even after unheard-of reverses have punished in so signal a manner the pride and the abuse of victory. He has shown himself not even capable of reigning in the interests of despotism. He has destroyed all that he wished to create. He believed in no other power but that of force; force now overwhelms him,—the just retribution of insensate ambition!"—*Moniteur, April 5*, 1814.

The departments, as the marvellous news reached them, all did the same. Still not a word was said in favour of the Bourbons; on the contrary, the great offices of state were nearly all filled up by Republicans. Dessolles, a noted democrat, was appointed to the command of the National Guard; M. Angles to the police; Henrion de Pansey, public justice; M. Beugnot, the interior; M. Louis, the finance; Laforest, foreign affairs; General Dupont, the army. The notorious Republican character of nearly all these appointments, and the entire absence of any Royalists in the programme, excited the serious alarm of the English who witnessed what was going on; and Sir Charles Stewart in particular wrote to Lord Castlereagh that all was going wrong—that nothing was thought of but securing a share in the spoils of the empire, and that Talleyrand would soon master France as completely by his intrigues as Napoleon had done by his army.[1] * But the result proved that Talleyrand was right,

[1] Moniteur, April 3 and 4, 1814; Cap. x. 482.

* "I have already acquainted you how entirely the management of every concern is with the Emperor [of Russia], and of the confidential Cabinet which he has selected. Count Nesselrode, very distinguished and independent as he is, leans, I fear, to Talleyrand; and General Pozzo di Borgo, who is the person accredited by his Imperial Majesty to the Provisional Government, though a man of consummate ability, yet is not of sufficient weight to afford any check to the French mode of proceeding. It is deeply to be lamented that his Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs [Castlereagh], by accidental circumstances, has been thrown out of the way of affording that incalculable benefit which his presence could not fail of producing here at this moment.

"From the best information I can obtain, and the most attentive observation, I am induced to believe that the Provisional Government are straining every nerve to consolidate their power so effectually, that, on the arrival of Louis XVIII., or his representative, *he will only be the shadow of a king*, and find himself dependent on these people, and enveloped in their proceedings. Every office in the government will be filled up—the constitution precisely formed as they shall point out. The Senate and Corps Legislatif having decided on it, the Provisional Government will approve of it, and it will be presented for the acceptance of the King, and thus I fear the root of the new government will be Talleyrand and his creatures instead of their legitimate sovereign under a proper form of legislation. Napoleon managed everything by his immense military power and the satellites pertaining to it. I hope Talleyrand, who is equally ambitious, is not endeavouring to become another absolute ruler, by chicane and political manœuvring.

"From what I have said your Lordship will perceive how much I hold it of importance that the Count d'Artois, or some of the family, should arrive in the capital with the smallest delay. A surveillance of the new Government,

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and that it was good policy to secure the Republicans in the first instance in preference to the Royalists. Of the latter he was secure from their affection; the former could be gained only by their interests.

62. Napoleon's movements and return towards Paris.

While these great events, big, as the result proved, with the fate of France and of Napoleon, were going on in Paris, the indomitable hero himself was pursuing, in the first instance, his military movements intended to draw back the Allies, by threatening their communications towards St Dizier. The brilliant success gained over Winzingerode's corps first wakened him to a sense of the danger with which he was threatened, for the prisoners

and some immediate control, are indispensably necessary for the satisfaction and contentment of the great body of the people of France, and the success of the cause of the Bourbons. This is the more necessary, because it is evident that the Emperor of Russia's policy throughout has been rather that of coquetting with the nation, than making any public or manifest declaration of any wishes relative to Louis XVIII. His declaration the other day in favour of the French prisoners was made to the Senate, and at their instance, when it afforded so great an opportunity to have the act done by the legitimate monarch. This circumstance and others give rise to conjecture whether the Emperor has not some hidden wishes: and he has conducted himself with so much address since his arrival here, that it is incalculable the hold he has obtained of the Parisian population. The more I reflect on the subject the more am I convinced that the Allies, and Great Britain in particular, have little to hope from the present Provisional Government more than at the commencement of some new revolution; whereas they would have everything to look for if the ancient Government were restored. There would be less intrigue, ambition, and personal animosity, which so much govern the present proceedings in the capital. It is universally known that people whom Talleyrand protects can be employed in any situation they like. In the Provisional Government I believe every man, except Montesquiou, is a creature of Talleyrand's. Caulaincourt, I have reason to believe, would have been included by Talleyrand if he could have prevailed on him to desert Napoleon; but after a good deal of negotiation he remained faithful.

"The revolution meanwhile appears to be carrying forward with a degree of tranquillity very unaccountable. The appointments to the ministry are highly approved. I had a conversation with M. Talleyrand yesterday. Steps are taking to communicate with the armies and the fortresses. Talleyrand believes firmly in a movement among them. Marmont and Lefebvre are the marshals who, it is supposed, will declare first. On the other hand, it is reported that Napoleon has an immense number of emissaries in Paris; that Girardin, who is Berthier's aide-de-camp, is here, with large sums of money; that some hundreds of the Old Guard have been introduced to head the insurrection; and that Napoleon is determined *de se faire jour* into Paris at any cost. This, however, I attribute greatly to the alarmists; but I confess I do not like the excessive tranquillity, and even indifference, that seems to exist."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *Paris, April* 4, 1814, *MS.*

taken there unanimously affirmed that they formed part only of a light corps detached in pursuit of the French army, and that the main body of the Allies was moving to the westward towards Paris. Firmly impressed, however, with the belief that it was by striking at their communications, and calling to his succour the garrisons on the Rhine, that these formidable hosts would be drawn back, and the danger from the capital averted, he still continued in his advanced position about St Dizier; merely, to secure his rear in his projected movement to the eastward, bringing up 120 guns to breach Vitry, which yet remained in the hands of the Allies. While the guns were moving up, however, he received advices which staggered his resolution. A short bulletin of the Allies was brought to headquarters with the account of the battle of Fère-Champenoise. Napoleon was strongly moved by this intelligence, not so much on account of its military importance, as of the effect which it could not fail to produce in the army, to which, from some prisoners taken, the truth was immediately known. He was not mistaken in his estimate of the effect it would produce. The clamour raised was general, and soon became irresistible. It was said universally that the Emperor had lost his senses, and that, after having caused the destruction of a part of his army, he was about to abandon the capital to the enemy, who would avenge the conflagration of Moscow by laying Paris in ashes. Napoleon was not convinced by this uproar, but he felt the necessity of yielding to the universal voice; and, halting the troops on their march towards Vitry, he returned to St Dizier, where next day he held a council of war, which was attended by Ney, Caulaincourt, Berthier, and Macdonald, besides other officers, to consider the course which should be adopted. He himself still strongly supported the continuance of the march to the eastward, even though it should lead to the temporary occupation of the capital by the enemy, alleging that, with the addition of the garri-

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risons on the Rhine, he would soon be at the head of 130,000 men, with which he would remeasure his steps, and speedily annihilate the invaders. But Ney and Berthier, better informed as to the state of public feeling in the capital, strongly combated that opinion, and warmly advocated an immediate return thither as the only chance left of saving the country. The remainder of the council were of the same opinion. The Emperor was not convinced, but overpowered, and orders were given for the whole army to march towards Paris.[1]

Thiers, xvii. 619, 620.

63. Napoleon returns to the neighbourhood of Paris.

The troops slept the first night at Doulevant, and, after crossing the Aube at Dolancourt, the Emperor on the following day reached Troyes. The greater part of the army, however, was a considerable way in the rear; they could not keep pace with the Emperor's horse-guards and cuirassiers. Next day he received, on the road from Troyes to Paris, a letter from Lavallette, which portrayed the imminent danger of the capital, the enormous mass of enemies by whom it was threatened from without, and the fearful agitations and intrigues by which it was menaced within. Devoured now with anxiety, he left his faithful Guards and pushed on, attended only by Caulaincourt and Berthier, sometimes on horseback, sometimes in post-carriage, having previously despatched General Dejean to Paris, with orders to the marshals to hold out to the last extremity, and assurances of his speedy return with his army to their support. Incessantly the Emperor pressed on, and, at midnight, having travelled without a moment's intermission the whole day, he had reached Fromenteau, within twelve miles of the capital, on the road to Fontainebleau. Arrived there, a small body of horse was seen approaching on the road from Paris. "Who is that?" cried the Emperor. "General Belliard," was the reply, who was moving from Paris towards Fontainebleau in terms of the capitulation of Paris.[2] On hearing this the Emperor threw himself out of the carriage, and,

March 30.

[2] Thiers, xvii. 620-622.

seizing General Belliard by the arm, overwhelmed him by a series of questions put so rapidly that there was scarce time to give them an answer.

64. Dialogue between Napoleon and General Belliard.

"Where is the army?" said the Emperor, with the utmost energy. "Sire, it is following me." "Where is the enemy?" "At the gates of Paris." "Who occupies Paris?" "Neither party; it is evacuated." "Evacuated!" cried the Emperor, with a look of horror; "and my son, the Empress, and the Government, where are they?" "Behind the Loire." "Who has ventured to take such a resolution?" "Sire! we were assured it was by your orders." "But Joseph, Clarke, Marmont, Mortier, what has become of them—what have they done?" "We have never seen, Sire, either Joseph or Clarke the whole day. As to Marmont and Mortier, they have acted like brave men; the troops have been admirable; the National Guard has rivalled the old soldiers; they heroically defended Belleville and Montmartre; but a long column threatened to cut them off, and throw them into the Seine. Ah, Sire! if you had been there with 10,000 men, we would have thrown the enemy into the Seine, saved Paris, and preserved the honour of our arms." "Doubtless it would have been so if I had been there; but I could not be everywhere. And Clarke and Joseph! what have they done? And my 200 pieces of cannon at Vincennes, what have they done? And the brave Parisians, have they made no use of them?" "We know nothing of them; we have done our best; the enemy have lost 12,000 men." "I might have expected it; Joseph has lost me Spain, and he will lose France. I would have done well to believe that poor Rovigo, who insisted with me that Clarke was a coward, a traitor, and, worse than all, an incapable fool. But enough of complaints; we must repair the faults; it is still time to do so; Caulaincourt, my carriage." With these words he mounted the carriage, and ordered every one to follow him. General Belliard,

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however, and those with him made such efforts to dissuade him, that at length they succeeded in persuading him to stop, which he did at the "Two Fountains," on the road to Juvisy. He remained there, sitting on the road-side, for a long time, his head resting on his hands, and his elbows on his knees, without saying a word. The bystanders remained in silence, respecting his grief. He then started suddenly up and asked if there was any place in the neighbourhood where he could repose a few minutes, examine his maps, and give his orders. He was shown to the neighbouring post, where lights were got, the maps were spread out, and, without exhibiting any symptoms of fatigue or anxiety, he was speedily engaged in dictating his orders. He had travelled that day sixty leagues, one-half on horseback, and the other in post-carriages.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 623, 624.

65. Napoleon's conversation with Caulaincourt, whom he sends to Paris to negotiate and gain time.

When the maps had been examined, and the distances measured, Napoleon exclaimed to Caulaincourt, as if seized by a sudden inspiration, "If my army was only here, everything would soon be repaired. Alexander will be anxious to show himself to the Parisians; he is not cruel; he will not think of burning Paris; he will think only of showing himself to that great city. To-morrow he will have a review; one-half of his troops will be on the south, one on the north of the Seine; were my troops only here, I would soon crush them. Alas! they cannot be here for three or four days!" To calm him, Caulaincourt said, "But, Sire! your army will be here in three or four days, and then you will be able to do all you wish." "Ah, Caulaincourt!" replied the Emperor, "you do not know men! Three days, two days, you little know what may be done in that time. You do not know what intrigues they will set on foot against me; how many will leave me. They say I ordered the Empress and my son to be taken out of Paris. It is true I did so, but why? The Empress is a child; I know not what they would have got her to do against me. Still

the army will arrive in three or four days; but how are we to gain time for it? I have it: Caulaincourt, you must fly to Paris to open a negotiation. Three or four days will be gained in negotiating, going and returning; by that time the army will be up, and everything will be remedied." "But, Sire," resumed Caulaincourt, "would it not be well to negotiate seriously, to yield to events, if not to men, and accept at once the basis of Chatillon, at least in its principal articles?" "No," replied Napoleon; "I have done enough when I hesitated an instant; no, no; the sword must now decide everything. Cease from humiliating me; it is yet time to save the grandeur of France. The chances are all in our favour, if I can gain three or four days." M. de Caulaincourt suggested that Berthier should be associated with him on the perilous mission. But to this the Emperor replied, "No, that will never do. Berthier is an admirable person; he has great qualities; he loves me, I love him; but he is weak. You cannot imagine what use the intriguers, who are about to act, might make of him. Go! set out without him; it is you alone whom I can trust to resist the intrigues in the centre where they are hatching."[1]

[1] Caul. ii. 231, 235; Thiers, xvii. 626, 627.

66. Who goes on to Paris, and Napoleon retires to Fontainebleau.

In conformity with these instructions, Caulaincourt went on to Paris to open negotiations afresh, while Napoleon returned to Fontainebleau, having previously ordered the troops which were arriving from the capital to take a position on the Essonne, and establish themselves there in as solid a manner as possible. He was full of hopes for the effects of this movement. Eighteen or twenty thousand good soldiers were retiring from Paris, and to these he trusted would soon be added 50,000 more coming up in his rear; and with these 70,000 men, animated by patriotism and indignation, he had sanguine hopes of being able to strike redoubtable blows against the enemy dispersed in Paris, and separated from each other by the intervening Seine. At the same time, he ordered the artillery

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lost in the battle of Paris to be replaced by pieces from the grand park. Meanwhile Caulaincourt repaired to Paris, and drove first to the Hôtel de Ville in quest of the only authority which remained in the abandoned capital; but finding them gone on to Bondy to wait on the Emperor Alexander, he followed them there, and was admitted to an audience of the Emperor. Alexander received him in the kindest manner, and even embraced him *à la Russe*, with every mark of affection. "He explained why he had not received him when an interview was sought at Prague; expressed his great regret at the refusal of the terms offered at Chatillon; and, without any expressions of resentment, declared that he had come to Paris only in search of peace; that he wished it to be honourable for France, but that it must be such as gave security to Europe. He added that the Allies could no longer consent to treat with Napoleon, and they would have no difficulty in finding one with whom they could safely treat; that the French were worn out with Napoleon, and resolved to be done with his despotism; that the Allies had no wish to do violence to the noble State of France; but, on the contrary, they profoundly respected it, and, as a proof of the sincerity of their regard, they left it the choice of its sovereign, and would respect its territory, and conclude a peace with the sovereign whom it might adopt. For these ends, he declared that the Allies, immediately on entering Paris, would call for the opinion of the two chambers, and consult the most eminent of the notables, and be guided by their opinion in the choice of a sovereign, whom they would sanction by the recognition and adhesion of all Europe. He added that they expected redoubtable strokes from Napoleon, who, as long as he had a sword in his hands, would not fail to strike them; but that their determination was irrevocably taken; and that, if driven from Paris, they would return again,[1] and never cease to combat till they had conquered a secure peace, which they could never hope to conclude

Morning of March 31.

[1] Thiers, xvii. 631-633; Caul. ii. 238, 241.

with a man who had ravaged Europe from Cadiz to Moscow."

These words filled Caulaincourt with despair; the more so that they were pronounced without passion or vehemence, and evidently the result, not of a sudden impulse, or the intoxication of unlooked-for success, but of a settled conviction and calm determination, on which the Allies were determined to act through all the mutations of fortune. He made use of every argument which the instructions of Napoleon, and the inferences deducible from his character could suggest, to combat the Emperor's reasons, but in vain. The Emperor, however, agreed to give him another audience that evening, after they had entered Paris. They met accordingly, and it was four in the morning of the next day when Caulaincourt left the Emperor; but he could make no impression, and remained in Paris till the next night. He still persisted in trusting that, in the most unfavourable view, by the proposal of a regency for Marie Louise, and the succession for the King of Rome, Austria could be detached from the Alliance, and less rigorous terms thus obtained. But the march of events already recounted, was so rapid as to defeat all these calculations. They verified too fatally the truth of Napoleon's words, "You little know what may be done in two or three days." Before his last audience with the Emperor Alexander could take place, which was on the 2d April, the dethronement of Napoleon had been determined on by the Senate, and proposals been made to him for his adhesion by the Provisional Government, which, after several offers had been made and considered by him, ended in his remaining faithful to the Emperor.[1]

67. Failure of his mission.

April 1.

[1] Thiers, xvii. 670, 676; Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Liverpool, April 4, 1814.

Impressed with the idea that it would still be possible to detach Austria from the Coalition, by the proposal to give the regency to Marie Louise, with the eventual succession to her son, which some hints that had dropped from him in the course of conversation led him to believe

68. His conference with Prince Schwartzenberg. April 2.

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would not be altogether displeasing to the Emperor Alexander, M. de Caulaincourt applied to Prince Schwartzenberg, with whom he had a long conference. He was far from meeting from him, however, the reception which he anticipated, or might have been expected from his previous military measures. Irritated at his urgent instances, and his efforts to detach the different Powers from each other, the Austrian generalissimo spoke rather with the frankness of a soldier than the reserve of a politician, and gave him plainly to understand that the time was gone by in which anything could be hoped from Austria. He told him plainly that they were determined to have nothing more to do with Napoleon or his family; that Austria had struggled with him to the very last, and had proposed the armistice of Lusigny to give him an opportunity of coming to reasonable terms; that in place of doing so, Napoleon had written to his father-in-law a letter couched in offensive words, for it supposed him capable of betraying his allies, and dangerous for Europe, if the Court of Vienna had been capable of being seduced by it; that from that moment the Emperor Francis, profoundly hurt, had renounced the idea of treating with Napoleon, and had gone into the hazardous project of marching on Paris, which had succeeded despite the dangers inseparable from such an enterprise; that he was now resolved not to treat with Napoleon on any terms; and that, having found France of the same mind, he did not see any possibility of halting in the career on which they had entered, for no peace was to be looked for, but by getting quit of the man who, during eighteen years, had overturned the world; that as to a regency for the Empress and her son, it was a mere chimera, since neither the one nor the other was capable of reigning, and it would necessarily be either the reign of Napoleon under a feigned name, or the most weak and impotent of governments, which could give neither repose nor security to Europe;[1] that the time had now arrived when it was necessary to take a decided part,

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, April 4, MS.; and Thiers, xvii. 685, 686.

and it would be more creditable to him, instead of vainly soliciting one after another those who listened with visages smoothed by politeness and ears closed by duty, to return to Napoleon, and explain to him how matters really stood, and thus terminate a state of agony at once painful and dangerous for France and the world.

69. Which was mainly owing to Lord Castlereagh being at the Austrian head-quarters.

This vigorous and somewhat rude exposition of the altered views and policy of the Austrian Cabinet was mainly owing to Lord Castlereagh, who fortunately at that moment was at Dijon in daily and close communication with the Emperor Francis and Prince Metternich, and whom he had succeeded in imbuing with his own decided opinions on the great question then depending in Paris. This at once appears by comparing the language of Schwartzenberg on this occasion with that hitherto used by Metternich and the Austrian Cabinet in all the conferences from Prague downwards. It was one of the most remarkable features in the character of this great man, as it was in that of Napoleon and Wellington, the ease with which he acquired an ascendancy over those around him, and that even more by confidential conversation than by public debate. In private life this is familiar to all; "*les gens habiles s'entendent à demi-mot;*" and sterling ability, and still more decision of mind, are felt more strongly in serious conversation than either at the council-board or practical life.

70. His last interview with Alexander. April 2.

Despairing, from his reception with Prince Schwartzenberg, of making any impression on the Austrian Cabinet, Caulaincourt had recourse again to the Emperor Alexander, who favoured him with an audience. The Emperor received him with the same affectionate cordiality as before, but abated nothing of his firm resolve never to treat with Napoleon or any of his family as sovereigns. He strongly recommended him to return instantly to Fontainebleau, and earnestly counsel his master to the last and inevitable sacrifice. "Set out," said the generous monarch, "for every moment they are urg-

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ing me to send you back. I am continually told that your presence intimidates many who might otherwise declare themselves, from an apprehension that Napoleon is to return. It will end, if you do not go, in my being obliged to remove you; for neither my allies nor myself can entertain any propositions tending to what you desire. I feel no resentment, rest assured of that. Napoleon is unfortunate; that is a sufficient reason for pardoning the evil he has done to Russia. But France, entire Europe, have need of repose, and they can never enjoy it when he is on the throne. We are irrevocably united on that point. Let him claim what he wishes for himself or his family; there is no asylum that we are not willing to afford to him. Let him take the hand which in sincerity I offer him, and he shall receive in Russia a magnificent and, what is of more consequence, a cordial hospitality. He I and will give an illustrious example to the universe—he in asking, I in affording that asylum. But there is no possible basis for a negotiation but his abdication. Depart then, and return as speedily as possible with his consent to the only possible basis of a negotiation." Caulaincourt in vain endeavoured to ascertain whether he would be permitted to abdicate in favour of his son. Alexander always eluded committing himself on this point. "But, Sire," said Caulaincourt, "if you take away France, will you give him an indemnity; will you give him Tuscany?" "Tuscany!" replied Alexander; "though it is but little in comparison of the French empire, do you think it possible that the Allies will leave Napoleon on the Continent, or that Austria will suffer him in Italy? It is impossible." "But Parma, Lucca?" replied Caulaincourt. "No, nothing on the Continent; it is impossible. But an *island is possible:* Corsica, for example." "But Corsica belongs to France, and Napoleon will never consent to receive part of its spoils." "*Well then, Elba,*" said Alexander: "but in the mean time set off; bring your master round to a resignation

now become indispensable, and we shall see what can be done. Everything that is honourable and suitable for him (*convenable*) shall be done. I have not forgotten what is due to a great man in misfortune." With this message Caulaincourt returned to Fontainebleau, where he arrived at midnight on the 2d.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 689, 690; Caul. ii. 47, 48.

71. Napoleon's rejection of the proposals.

Arrived there, he lost no time in communicating to the Emperor the message with which he was charged, and in an especial manner the required condition that he should abdicate. Napoleon treated as altogether chimerical the idea of restoring the Bourbons in France. "Re-establish the Bourbons!" said he. "The madmen! They would not be there a year: they are hated by nine-tenths of the French. And how would the army, whose chiefs have combated the emigrants—how would they bear the change? No! my soldiers can never be theirs; it is the height of folly to think of founding an empire of such heterogeneous materials as theirs would of necessity be composed of. Can it ever be forgotten that they have lived twenty years on the bread of the stranger, at open war with the principles and interests of France? The Bourbons in France! it is absolute madness, and will bring down on France a whole host of calamities. I was a new man; clear of the blood which had stained the Revolution: I had nothing to avenge, everything to reconstruct; but even I should never have ventured to seat myself on the vacant throne, if my head had not been crowned with the laurels of victory. The French nation have raised me on their bucklers only because I have illustrated their name by glorious deeds. But what have the Bourbons done for France? Re-established by the stranger, they must yield everything to their masters; they must bend the knee to them at every turn. They may take advantage of the stupor produced by the occupation of the capital to proscribe me and my family; but to make the Bourbons reign in France!—that can never be!"[2]

[2] Caul. ii. 48-50.

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72. Napoleon's plans for resuming hostilities.

Full of these ideas, Napoleon had resolved upon bringing matters at once to an issue, and with that view to advance direct upon Paris. He had collected 70,000 men on the Essonne, between those who retired from Paris and those who were coming up after him from St Dizier; and with these he proposed to attack the portion of the Allies, 80,000 strong, who had taken post between him and the capital. He had no doubt he would succeed in driving them back upon Paris; and he was then to issue a proclamation to the Parisians, calling on them to rise, erect barricades, and expel the enemy, dispersed in many quarters over their city. In the alarm of the moment, he was extremely sanguine that they would evacuate the town, in order to concentrate their scattered forces; and in that event he had no doubt whatever that he would compel them to retreat towards the Rhine, where the peasants and National Guard of Burgundy, Champagne, and Lorraine would complete their destruction. To restore the confidence of his troops, he issued an animated proclamation to them, declaring that he had offered peace to the Allies, but they would not accept it; that he would lead them to Paris, and drive them from its walls.* Every forenoon, as they successively arrived, he passed the men in review, and promised them a splendid revenge under the walls of the capital. He was received with enthusiasm—the soldiers waving their sabres or agitating their bayonets, and mingling with cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" the still louder cry of "A Paris! A Paris!" The Imperial Guard, in an especial manner, were distinguished by the

* "Soldiers! The enemy has gained some marches on us, and outstripped us at Paris. Some factious men, the emigrants whom I have pardoned, have mounted the white cockade, and surrounded the Emperor Alexander; they would compel us to wear it. Shall we do so? Since the Revolution France has always been mistress to choose her own governors. I offered peace to the Allies, leaving France in its ancient limits; but they would not accept it. In a few days I will attack the enemy: I shall force him to quit our capital. I rely on you—am I right in doing so? Our cockade is the tricolor; before abandoning it we will all perish on the soil of France."—CAPEFIGUE, x. 496.

vehemence of their cries and the enthusiasm of their manner whenever the Emperor appeared before them. Encouraged by these symptoms, the Emperor resolved to persevere in his design; and with his usual energy he drew out and issued orders for the movement of the whole army towards Paris.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 694-696; Cap. x. 494-496.

73. Napoleon is still resolved to continue the war.

The enthusiasm of the brave men who composed his army inspired the Emperor with the most sanguine hopes of success. "I might," said he, "have dethroned the Emperor Francis and the King of Prussia, and I might have raised the peasants against the Emperor of Russia. I have done none of these things. I acted towards them as a sovereign; they have acted towards me as a Jacobin. The least envenomed amongst them is Alexander: he has now had his revenge. He is good, though deceitful. The Austrians are what they have always been — humble in adversity, insolent in prosperity. They forced their daughter upon me, and now they act towards her as if she were no longer their own. Schwartzenberg is entirely given up to the emigration. Metternich is in the hands of the English. My father-in-law gives them their own way. We shall see if he will let them proceed to extremities— the Empress hopes the reverse. The English and Prussians wish the destruction of France; but all is not yet ended. As to Talleyrand, I am nowise surprised; he has revenged himself on me, the Bourbons will avenge me on him. They are striving to remove me, because they feel that I alone am capable of reinstating affairs. I am not bound to the throne, believe me. Born a soldier, I can become a citizen. You know my tastes: what do I require? A little bread if I live; six feet of earth if I die. I love, and have loved, glory, it is true; but that which I have acquired is beyond the reach of men. If I desire to command a few days longer, it is to restore the lustre of our arms, to deliver France from her implacable enemies. You have done well to sign no-

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thing. I would never have subscribed to the conditions which they would impose on me. The Bourbons may do so without dishonour : I cannot. Do not suppose that fortune has finally declared against me. If the army had been up, I would have made my attack before this, and all would have been over in two hours ; for the enemy is in a position to lose everything. What glory will it be for us to chase them away !—what glory for the Parisians to expel the Cossacks from their streets, and hand them over to the inhabitants of Champagne and Burgundy, who will complete their destruction ! It is only a delay, however. The day after to-morrow, I shall have the corps of Macdonald, Oudinot, and Gerard up, and if they will follow me, I shall soon change the state of affairs. The chiefs are fatigued, but the mass will march with me ; my old mustaches will set the example ; and there is not a soldier who will hesitate to follow their example. In a few hours, my dear Caulaincourt, all may be changed ; and then, what satisfaction, what glory !" [1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 698, 699 ; Caul. ii. 46, 47.

74. Discouragement and division of the army.

It soon appeared, however, that these sanguine hopes were unfounded, and that not only were the chiefs of the army averse to the continuance of hostilities, but that division and despondency had spread among the troops. In presence of the Emperor, or when he was passing them in review, the men evinced all their wonted enthusiasm, but when they retired to their bivouacs their feelings cooled down, and despondency generally prevailed. It was whispered through the army that a revolution had broken out in Paris, and that the leading men in the Government had taken a part in it. Matters were in this uncertain state when news arrived, on the night of the 3d, that the Emperor had been dethroned by the Senate. This intelligence produced a great impression, especially on the marshals and older generals.[2] The orders to advance to Paris were not recalled, but it soon became doubtful whether they would be obeyed, and the utmost agitation

[2] Cap. x. 492 ; Caul. ii. 28-37 ; Fain, 218, 219.

prevailed in the troops, and discontent amongst the older officers. Ney, in an especial manner, made himself remarkable for the vehemence of his language. "Are we," said he, "to sacrifice everything to one man?—fortune, rank, honours, life itself? It is high time to think a little of ourselves, our families, and our interests."

75. Reasons which determined Marshal Marmont to join the Allies.

But an event was meanwhile in progress which was to decide the question irrevocably,—Marmont with his whole corps was going over to the enemy. To understand how this came about, it must be mentioned that Talleyrand, as already stated, had opened secret communications with Marshal Marmont, who, after his glorious defence of Paris, had retired to the Essonne, and formed the advanced-guard of the army on the road to the capital. The marshal, who had had a conference with Napoleon, who warmly eulogised his gallant conduct, and authorised him to distribute rewards among the troops, was distracted by opposite feelings on receiving these advances. His mental conflict must be given in his own words:. "Happy those who live under a regular government, or who, sheltered in an obscure situation, are saved from such terrible difficulties. Let them abstain from blaming me: they cannot comprehend a state of things unknown to them. On the one side, I beheld the fall of Napoleon—a friend, a benefactor—a fall certain, inevitable, whatever might happen: for the means of defence had in great part disappeared; and the opinion of Paris, and of great part of France, having become hostile, completed the mass of evils which overwhelmed us. That fall, if retarded for a few days, would complete the ruin of the country; while the country, in taking the sovereigns at their word, would compel respect. Would not the resumption of fruitless hostilities disengage them from their offers and promises? Were not the decided expressions of public opinion which had taken place, the acts of the Senate, of the Legislative Body, the only plank of safety which remained for a nation on the point of being swallowed up in shipwreck? Assuredly fears

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and force alone were capable of subduing the personal resistance of Napoleon; but was it necessary to devote ourselves to him at the expense of France? Would not the wreck of the army, by adhering to the Provisional Government, give it a sort of dignity which might cause it to be respected by strangers? How profound soever my interest might be in Napoleon, I could not shut my eyes to the wrongs he had committed towards France. He alone had dug the abyss which threatened to swallow us up. What efforts had we not made, and above all others, to prevent him from falling into it! The time had now arrived when the country was entitled to its turn. With new circumstances new duties arose. Was it not my duty to undertake them? Public universal opinion then condemned Napoleon as the sole obstacle to the pacification of Europe and the safety of the country. Its military resources were exhausted. Reduced to nothing, they could not be re-established. Recruiting was out of the question. Paris lost, all fell to pieces. In these circumstances, the first thing to do was to obtain a suspension of hostilities, to give diplomacy an opportunity of determining our destinies. To effect this, it was indispensable to enter into communication with the strangers. The step was painful, but it was unavoidable. I assembled my generals. Their opinion was unanimous. Conferences were opened with Prince Schwartzenberg, and a letter was written to the Emperor, intended to be despatched when all things were arranged, announcing that, after having discharged my duty to my country, I was prepared to consecrate the rest of my life to his service."[1]

April 3 and 4.

[1] Marm. vi. 257-261.

76. Marmont's conference with Alexander, and defection of his corps in his absence. April 4.

Just as he had taken this decisive step, Caulaincourt and Macdonald arrived at Marmont's headquarters (4th April) on their way to Paris, bearers, as will be immediately explained, of Napoleon's abdication in favour of his son. As soon as Marmont heard this, he communicated to them what he had already done, but promised to break off at once any separate negotiation, to unite his fate for good with

theirs, and to accompany them to Paris. He then assembled his officers, and having publicly enjoined them to make no movement until his return, he set out for the capital, leaving the command of his corps to the senior officer, General Souham. Arrived there he had a long conference with the Emperor Alexander, with whom, abandoning Napoleon with no other stipulation than security and respect for his person, he earnestly pleaded for a regency in the person of Marie Louise, and the succession for his son. The Emperor declared he had no power to accede to such a proposition, and held out no hopes that it would be acceded to by the other sovereigns.* Having obtained this answer, the Marshal, early on the morning of the 5th, was attending a conference of the other marshals then in Paris, on the course to be pursued, when Colonel Fabvier arrived from Essonne announcing that affairs had advanced at so rapid a pace that they had now become irrevocable. Shortly after Marmont's departure, several officers arrived at his headquarters with orders for him to repair without delay to the Emperor at Fontainebleau. Hearing of this, the generals of his corps, conceiving that their communication with Schwartzenberg, and resolution to pass over, had become known, deemed their danger imminent, and to secure their own safety deemed it indispensable to pass over at once to the Allied lines. They did so, accordingly, in the face of the strongest representations from Colonel Fabvier, Marmont's aide-de-camp, and reached Versailles in safety. Marmont obtained intelligence of these events early on the 5th, and soon after he received a letter from General Bordessoulles, dated from Versailles, detailing the reasons

* "My Lord,—I have much gratification in detailing to your Lordship that, upon a communication which has been made to Marshal Marmont, he has consented to pass over with his whole *corps d'armée*, amounting to between 9000 and 10,000, and enrol himself and his followers in the cause of their legitimate sovereign. I understand that he stipulated two principal conditions—the one, that Buonaparte's person, if taken, should not be sacrificed; the other, that, if on his march he should be attacked, the Allied troops were to support him. This very favourable event so decidedly denotes the downfall of Buonaparte, that the peace of the world is at hand."—Sir Charles Stewart *to* Lord Liverpool, *April* 4, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 440.

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of the step he had taken. He endeavours, in his Memoirs, to throw the blame of the defection on the generals who carried it into execution during his absence, but it is evident that this was a mere subterfuge. Right or wrong, the responsibility rested with himself, for he had brought them into a situation from which retreat was impossible, and advance in the line adopted was the only course that remained open.[1]*

[1] Marm. vi. 263, 264; Thiers, xvii. 724-726.

77. Interview of the Marshals with Napoleon at Fontainebleau. April 3.

Swift as in this manner was the march of events at Marmont's headquarters and at Paris, it was still more rapid at Fontainebleau, and with the Emperor Napoleon. He remained shut up in his cabinet the whole of the 3d with Caulaincourt, Maret, and Berthier, to whom he exhaled, with the utmost bitterness, against the baseness of Talleyrand and the Senate, and the senseless project of attempting to "break his fall by setting up the phantom of a regency in favour of the Empress and her son." The following morning he seemed determined to persevere in his plan of marching upon Paris; and, as his troops were now nearly all closed up from the rear, he talked of moving on the next day, or the one following at furthest, when it was announced that the Marshals Ney, Macdonald, Oudinot, and Lefebvre were in attendance in the antechamber. The Emperor ordered them to be shown in. They gave the most melancholy account of the state of affairs in the army and at Paris, adding that they saw no end to this cruel situation. "The end," said Napoleon, "depends on

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* "MONSEIGNEUR,—M. le Colonel Fabvier a du dire à votre Excellence les motifs qui nous ont engagés à executer le mouvement que nous étions convenus de suspendre jusqu'au retour de MM. les Princes de la Moskwa, des Duc de Tarente et de Vicensi. Nous sommes arrivés avec tout ce qui compose le corps. Absolument tout nous a suivi et avec connaissance du parti que nous prenions, l'ayant fait connaître à la troupe avant des marcher. Maintenant, Monseigneur, pour tranquilliser les officiers sur leur sort, il serait bien urgent que le Gouvernement Provisoire fit une addresse ou proclamation à ce corps et qu'en lui faisant connaître sur quoi il peut compter *ou lui fasse payer un mois de solde.* Sans cela il est à craindre qu'il ne se debande. MM. les generaux et officiers sont tous avec nous, M. Lucotte excepté. Ce joli monsieur nous avait dénoncés à l'Empereur. J'ai l'honneur, etc. Le Général de division, COMTE BORDESSOULLES."—MARMONT, vi. 264, 265.

you. You are at the head of brave soldiers, who have neither rank nor fortune to save, but who think only of marching to snatch France from the hands of the stranger. You must follow them. The Allies are in a disadvantageous position, separated by the Seine, and dispersed over an immense city. Vigorously attacked in that position, they are lost. Doubtless they may return; but Eugene is coming back from Italy with 36,000 men. Augereau has 30,000; Suchet, 20,000; Soult, 40,000. I shall draw to myself the greater part of these forces, in addition to the 70,000 I already have. With this mass I shall throw into the Rhine all who escape from Paris and may seek to re-enter it. We shall save France, avenge her honour, and then I will accept a moderate peace. What is required for all this? A last effort, which will permit you to enjoy repose after twenty years of labour."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 706, 707.

78. Continuation of the discussion.

Notwithstanding the force of these arguments, the marshals seemed far from convinced. They objected the extreme danger to the capital if it were in this manner made a battle-field, and ran the risk of undergoing the fate of Moscow. Napoleon answered, that he had no wish to inflict evil on the Parisians, but that he proposed to attack the enemy where he found him, and that his present position offered every prospect of success in so doing. Turning then to Ney, Oudinot, and Lefebvre, he asked if they would like to live under the Bourbons? They loudly, and with the utmost vehemence, declared they would not, and that the only sovereign they desired was the King of Rome. "Do you really believe, then," said Napoleon, "that by abdicating I would secure for you the advantage of living under my son? Do you not see that the proposal of a regency and of the succession of the King of Rome is a mere snare intended for our destruction? The Empress and my son would not sustain themselves an hour. It would lead to fifteen days of anarchy, which would end in the Bourbons. Besides, there are family

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secrets connected with this matter which I cannot divulge. The government of my wife is impossible." At this moment Marshal Macdonald came in with a letter from M. Beurnonville in his hand. "What news have you?" "Very bad," replied the marshal. "I am assured that there are 200,000 Allies in Paris, and that a battle is imminent, which will ruin everything; it is time, they say, to be done with all this." "Beurnonville," said Napoleon, "is one of the intriguers who is half leagued with the enemy, who would leave France ruined and for ever weakened, and who would bring in the Bourbons who, instead of pacifying, would throw everything into confusion. Perseverance and two hours alone are required to change all that." "Possibly so," replied Macdonald; "but that can only be by fighting in our capital in ashes, and probably over the dead bodies of our children. Moreover, I am not sure our soldiers would obey us in such an attempt." In this statement the other marshals concurred; throwing thus upon the soldiers an attempted act of disobedience, which in fact originated with themselves. Napoleon divined their meaning; he saw that it was intended to coerce him. "If they will not obey you," said he, "they will obey me; I have but to say the word, and they will follow wherever I lead." Then assuming the air of dignity, which he knew so well how to put on, he said, "Withdraw, gentlemen! I will consider the matter, and let you know my intentions."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 705-708.

79. Napoleon feigns to consent to abdicate in favour of his son.

The marshals withdrew from this extraordinary interview, thinking that all was gained; and they boasted to their aide-de-camps that they had at length bearded the lion in his den, and drawn the veil from before the eyes of the Emperor. In reality, however, they had only taken the mask from their own faces, and noways changed his intentions. He saw clearly that treason had spread to his own camp, and that his own marshals were meditating revolt against his authority, under colour of having lost the command of their troops. When the chiefs had left

the room, he broke forth to Berthier, Caulaincourt, and Maret, who remained behind, on the ingratitude of men, and inveighed in an especial manner against Macdonald, who had taken the lead in the coercion attempted to be put upon him. Feigning compliance, however, in order to gain time for the arrival of the remainder of his army, which was rapidly coming up, he agreed to send Caulaincourt back to Paris with a conditional resignation in favour of the Empress and his son, which the marshals demanded, and authority to make the requisite arrangements.* There was some difficulty about the chiefs who should accompany him, and Marshal Ney was proposed. "He is the bravest of men," said the Emperor; "but I have others at this moment who will fight as well as him, and you will deliver me from him. Nevertheless, you must watch over him, he is a mere child; if he falls into the hands of Talleyrand and Alexander he is lost, and you will be unable to do anything." Marmont was then mentioned: "No," said Napoleon, "I require him on the Essonne; he is too necessary." Macdonald was then proposed and agreed to, and the marshals being called in, Napoleon said to them—"I have reflected, gentlemen, on our situation, and on what it has suggested to you, and I have resolved to put to the test the sincerity of the Allied sovereigns. They pretend that I am the sole obstacle to peace and the happiness of the world. Well, I am willing to sacrifice myself in order to dispel that false illusion, and to resign the throne on condition that it shall pass to my son, who, during his minority, shall be placed under the regency of the Empress. Does this meet your views?" They declared it did, and it was agreed to send Ney and Macdonald along with Caulaincourt to Paris.

* "The Allied Powers having proclaimed that the Emperor Napoleon is the sole obstacle to the re-establishment of peace in Europe,—the Emperor Napoleon, faithful to his oath, declares that he is ready to descend from the throne, to quit France, and even life itself, for the good of his country, which is inseparable from the rights of his son, of the regency of the Empress, and of the maintenance of the laws of the empire."—*Proclamation, April* 4, 1814; FAIN, 221.

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"Marshal," said Napoleon to the latter, "I had long prejudices against you, but you know they have been long since dissipated; I know now your loyalty, and feel that you will prove the firmest support of my son's interests." He then took the pen to sit down to sign the conditional abdication; but before doing so he looked up and said, "Nevertheless, we shall fight them if we choose."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 744, 745.

80. Marmont appeases a mutiny in his corps.

Bearing this important authority, Caulaincourt, Macdonald, and Ney set out on the afternoon of the 4th for their destination at Paris, and on their way called, as already mentioned, at Marmont's headquarters on the Essonne, whom they were authorised, if they deemed it expedient, to take with them. They found him distant and embarrassed, and little disposed to form part of the mission. They soon learned the cause of his objections to join them, and used their utmost efforts to induce him to abandon the part which he had taken. He finally consented to suspend any separate movement, and go with them to Paris to see what terms could be arranged for Napoleon. There, on the next forenoon, the news of the passing over to the Allies of his corps, already narrated, arrived. Marmont immediately set out for their

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headquarters, now within the Allied lines. But, on the way, intelligence arrived that a formidable insurrection had broken out among his troops, who, having learned that the Emperor had issued an order to his army to prepare for a march to Paris, were hastening back to their comrades, and demanded with loud cries to be led against the enemy. Marmont instantly pushed on to Versailles, where his corps now had its headquarters, to appease the tumult, and on the way met large bodies of the soldiers in disorder hastening back to their comrades on the Essonne. The marshal ordered a general halt, and the instinct of military discipline prevailed. It was obeyed, and, forming a circle of officers and privates around him, he recalled to their recollection in a few nervous sentences the perils they had shared together, and called on

them not to sully their common honour by compelling him to break his pledged word to the Allied sovereigns. The words were repeated by the officers to the soldiers, and they unanimously cried, "Vive le Duc de Ragusa!"[1] and quickly took their departure to the quarters assigned to them within the Allied lines at Mantes.[1]

[1] Marm. vi. 266-269; Thiers, xvii. 715, 716.

81. Interview of the plenipotentiaries with the Emperor Alexander. April 5.

To return, however, to Caulaincourt and his mission. He and the marshals continued their journey to Paris, and arrived at the Emperor Alexander's quarters, at M. Talleyrand's, in the Rue Florentin, at two o'clock on the morning of the 5th. Great was the sensation produced there by the intelligence that they came with the conditional abdication of Napoleon, in favour of the Empress as regent, and his son as his successor. After some delay, they were admitted to an audience of the Emperor Alexander, who received them with his wonted courtesy, and, after paying them many compliments on the skill and valour they had displayed during the campaign, recounted the sacrifices he had made to preserve the French alliance, the unprovoked attack made upon him by Napoleon, and the subsequent and obstinate resistance he had opposed to all attempts at a reconciliation. He then disclaimed, in the most decided manner, any wish to impose a sovereign or constitution on France contrary to the wishes of the nation, and concluded with these words: "Come to an understanding, gentlemen, among yourselves; adopt any constitution which may please you; choose the chief who you may deem most suitable for that constitution. It belongs to you, who, by your services and your glory, have acquired so many titles to it, to choose the new chief of France. We shall receive him with cordiality, and accept him with sincerity, provided he does not menace our repose or our independence." It was easy to see from these words that the Emperor was still thinking of Bernadotte, to whom alone these expressions were applicable.[2]

[2] Thiers, xvii. 725, 726.

Marshal Ney here stepped forward, and spoke in the

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82. Marshal Ney's answer.

name of himself and his colleagues, but with the energy and warmth peculiar to himself, as follows: "We have suffered more than any one else from the incessant wars of which Europe so justly complains, and we have been the first victims of that imperious despot whom you wish to be done with, for the Continent is covered with the corpses of our companions in arms, and certes we are not the last to desire his overthrow. As to the flattering proposal, to choose a chief among ourselves—an insinuation which, if seriously meant, can apply only to Bernadotte—there is but one to whom all the chiefs would concur in yielding the supremacy, and that chief, abandoned by fortune, has put himself out of the limits of possibility by his abdication. After him, no one can be thought of, and the *ci-devant* French chief, covered with French blood, would revolt every heart. The son of Napoleon alone, with his mother as regent, would satisfy the army and people of France." Macdonald warmly supported his opinion, declaring that the reign of the Bourbons would be in the highest degree obnoxious in France, would lead to internal convulsions, and deprive it of all external respect; and that the regency and succession of the King of Rome would alone unite the vast majority of suffrages. Alexander, visibly moved by these representations, which found a responsive echo in his secret thoughts, objected to the marshals, the act of the Senate and of the Legislative Body dethroning the Emperor, and observed that the chief authorities of the empire concurred in declaring for its overthrow. "That miserable Senate!" exclaimed Ney, "it was always the first to applaud his acts, to worship his footsteps; it was silent when it should have spoken, and it has spoken when it should have been silent." General Dessolles, seeing that the Emperor was beginning to waver, here interposed, and warmly contended for the restoration of the Bourbons, to which he alleged the honour of the Emperor was pledged;[1] and Alexander, distracted by these opposite opinions, graciously broke

[1] Thiers, xvii. 728-730; Cap. x. 506, 507.

up the conference that he might consult the King of Prussia and the representatives of the other Allied sovereigns.

83. The Allied sovereigns finally and decidedly declare against Napoleon.

The marshals retired from this first conference much elated, and entertaining sanguine hopes that the cause of the King of Rome was not lost. A warm altercation, attended with high words, ensued when they came into the antechamber and met Talleyrand and General Dupont, who were the leading members of the Provisional Government. At length M. Talleyrand convinced them that the antechamber of the Emperor of Russia was not the proper place for such a dispute, and they retired to Marshal Ney's, where they passed the night. The Royalists in Paris, seeing the Emperor visibly shaken by what had been advanced by the marshals, spared no effort in the interim to secure his wavering resolution and bring him back to the side of the Bourbons. They despatched General Beurnonville with the same view to the King of Prussia, and a meeting of the sovereigns and their representatives took place at Talleyrand's in the course of the evening, at which the question was fully discussed. It was no difficult matter to bring them to an understanding. It was too plain that the regency of Marie Louise, and the succession of her son, was in reality the government of Napoleon veiled under a thin disguise, and would leave Europe exposed to the whole dangers from which it had so recently, and with so much difficulty, escaped. They accordingly came to a unanimous decision that the former determination should be adhered to, not to treat with Napoleon "or any of his family." Hardly was this resolution adopted when intelligence arrived of the defection of Marmont's corps, and its arrival in the Allied lines. This important event removed the last traces of doubt from the mind of Alexander. He re-entered the apartment in Talleyrand's hotel where the marshals were assembled, and declared in a decided manner that they must renounce all thoughts

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either of Napoleon or Marie Louise; that the Bourbons alone met the wishes, and could secure the interests, of Europe; and that it was in vain to speak of the army as a united body, for he had just learned the defection of an entire corps, which would doubtless be soon followed by that of all the rest. He then assured them that Napoleon would be quite safe in committing himself to the generosity of the Allied sovereigns, and that he pledged himself that he should be treated with his family in a manner suitable to his past grandeur. To some further representations of the marshals, he replied, "*Il est trop tard*," words memorable as having twice in one half century heralded the downfall of a dynasty in France.[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 738-741; Thib. x. 15, 21; Caul. ii. 51, 57; Cap. x. 506-509.

84. Their interview with Napoleon at Fontainebleau.

In bidding farewell to the deputation, Alexander retained M. de Caulaincourt a few minutes behind the rest, and promised him the isle of Elba, already mentioned, as an asylum for the Emperor Napoleon, and a principality in Italy for Marie Louise and her son. Fortified with this promise, the plenipotentiaries returned to Fontainebleau, where they arrived in the evening and found the Emperor informed of the defection of Marmont's corps. Ney entered the first; and if credit is to be given to his own assertion of what passed on the occasion, he had the principal hand in forcing the Emperor to an immediate and unconditional abdication. He wrote to Talleyrand that very night at half-past eleven, announcing Napoleon's agreement to that step.* During the long and mournful interview which succeeded, the Emperor at first contended

* "Yesterday I came to Paris with the Duke of Vicenza and the Duke of Tarentum, furnished with full powers from the Emperor Napoleon to defend the interests of his dynasty on the throne. An unforeseen event having broken off the negotiations when they promised the happiest results, I saw that to prevent a civil war to our beloved country no course remained but to embrace the cause of our ancient kings, and, penetrated with this sentiment, I repaired that evening to the Emperor Napoleon to declare to him the wishes of the French nation. The Emperor, aware of the critical situation to which he has reduced France, and of the impossibility of his saving it himself, appeared to resign himself to his fate, and has consented to an absolute resignation without any restriction."—MARSHAL NEY *to* PRINCE TALLEYRAND, *Fontainebleau, April 5*, 1814, *half-past eleven at night; Moniteur, April 7.*

strongly for a continuance of the contest—urging the forces still at his command as adequate for the purpose; and although they represented that nothing remained but a pure and unconditional resignation, he continued unconvinced, and dismissed them for the night without having come to any final decision. Left alone with Caulaincourt, when they withdrew he said, "Ah, Caulaincourt! Men, men! my marshals blushed in recounting the conduct of Marmont: they spoke of him with indignation; but I could easily see it was chiefly because he had outstripped them in what is now the path of fortune. They would gladly, if they could do so without dishonouring themselves, like him acquire the same titles to the favour of the Bourbons. I have acted towards Marmont as if he was my own son: I have often defended him from his colleagues, who, unable to appreciate his mind, held in no esteem his military talents. I have made him marshal-duke from personal liking, the recollections of childhood, and I must say I counted on him. He is the only man, perhaps, of whose fidelity I had no suspicion; but vanity, weakness, ambition, have ruined him! Unhappy man! He knows not what awaits him: his name will be withered. Think no more of me; my career is ended, or nearly so. What comfort could it be to reign over hearts tired of me, and ready to give themselves to another. I shudder when I think of the state in which I shall leave France, without frontiers, when it once had them so strong. It is that, Caulaincourt, which is poignant in the misfortunes which are accumulating on my head: to have made it so great, to have left it so little! Ah! if these imbeciles had not abandoned me, in four hours I would have re-established affairs; for the Allies in their present position, with Paris in rear and me in front, were lost. Meanwhile the Bourbons arrive, and God only knows what will follow. They bring external peace, but internal war. See what in a year they will have made of the country! They will not keep Talleyrand six months. A prolonged

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contest had many chances, but at the cost of frightful sacrifices. For the moment they must change masters; my name, my image, my sword, filled them with terror. We must capitulate; I will recall the marshals, and you will see their joy when I have extricated them from their embarrassment, and left them at liberty to act like Marmont, without losing their honour."[1]

[1] Thiers, xvii. 750, 751.

85. Napoleon agrees to resign the crown.

After these and many similar words, Napoleon discussed the terms proposed for his family, which were adjusted without difficulty. For himself he made no difficulties: he accepted the island of Elba in sovereignty as his place of retirement, and urged only an adequate provision for his family, and suggested Tuscany for the Empress. "My son would then be an archduke: it is perhaps better than the throne of France." Caulaincourt let him know that this would not be, as it was too near Elba, but that, thanks to Alexander, he would at least have Parma. "What!" said Napoleon; "in exchange for the empire of France, not even Tuscany! well, be it so." He then agreed to the other terms proposed for the remainder of his family, and ordered the marshals to be

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called in again. This was at six in the morning of the 6th. Not knowing what determination he had come to, the military chiefs began again to recount in the strongest terms the deplorable and exhausted condition of the troops. Napoleon allowed them to go on for some time, and then said, "Gentlemen! you need not be afraid; no more blood shall be shed. I agree to abdicate, purely and simply. I could have wished, for your sake as well as my own, to secure the throne for my son; I believe that such a request would be more advantageous to you than to myself, for it would have secured you a government in harmony with your origin, your sentiments, your interests. It might have been brought about; but an unworthy treachery has deprived you of advantages which I hoped to have secured to you. But for the defection of the 6th corps we might have hoped to restore affairs

and saved France. It is now no longer possible to do so. I submit to my fate—do you submit to yours. Resign yourselves to live under the Bourbons and serve them faithfully. You have wished for repose; you shall have it. Alack! God grant that my anticipations may not prove too well-founded. We are not a generation made for repose. The peace you desire will cut off more on their bed of down than war would have done in its bivouacs." Having said these words, Napoleon read to them the act of abdication, which was immediately sent off to Paris.[1]*

[1] Thiers, xvii. 256, 257.

An attentive observer of these momentous changes, Sir Charles Stewart communicated to his brother, Lord Castlereagh, who was still at Dijon,† full details of what

* "Les Puissances Alliées ayant proclamé que l'Empereur Napoléon était le seul obstacle au rétablissement de la paix en Europe, l'Empereur Napoléon, fidèle à ses serments, declare qu'il renonce pour lui et ses hertiers aux trônes de France et d'Italie, parcequ'il n'est aucun sacrifice personnel, même celui de la vie, qu'il ne soit prêt à faire à l'intérêt de la France."—*Moniteur, April* 8, 1814.

† "The conferences of the marshals with the Emperor of Russia, collectively and separately, led to the determination of offering Buonaparte the island of Elba as a retreat, with an income of 6,000,000 francs—3,000,000 for himself and Maria Louisa, and 3,000,000 to be divided between his brothers and sisters. It is supposed he is fallen so low as to accept of this. M. Caulaincourt and Ney were very violent and strong in their entreaties for a regency—Buonaparte having abdicated with that view. The Emperor of Russia *was firm, and gained Macdonald*, Marmont having been already secured. His Imperial Majesty declared the Allies had already announced they would not treat with Napoleon Buonaparte or any of his family, and that they were determined by the voice of the nation to proclaim Louis XVIII. Buonaparte's decision is expected to-morrow."—Sir Charles Stewart *to* Lord Castlereagh, *Paris, April* 5, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 442.

"In announcing to your Lordship that Napoleon Buonaparte has accepted the terms offered by the Allies for his future existence and that of his family, I cannot resist offering my humble congratulations that the tragedy which has desolated Europe has come to a close, and that the exit of the individual from the stage where he has so long exhibited, should be marked by that degradation which his career has so deservedly entailed upon him. Almighty God has been pleased to teach the nations of the world a lesson which future ages will record; and the events of the French Revolution connected with the Revolution of 1814, will hand down to posterity an awful and instructive example.

"Marshal Ney writes that Napoleon Buonaparte will proceed to such place as may be indicated, accepting the island of Elba and the pensions granted by the bounty of the Allies. He requests to have his family sent to him without delay. The French army will move to the environs of Paris. Every

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86. Sir Charles Stewart's important letter with regard to giving Elba as a residence to Napoleon. April 7.

was going on, of which he obtained the earliest and most authentic information. His letters contain some curious details, not to be met with in the French historians, especially as to the firmness of Alexander and the manner in which he acquired an ascendancy over Macdonald. No sooner, however, did he learn that the island of Elba was proposed to be assigned to the fallen Emperor for his residence, than, with the sagacity and good sense which belonged to him, he wrote in the strongest terms to Lord Bathurst, then acting as Foreign Secretary in the absence of Lord Castlereagh, pointing out in the clearest terms the extreme danger of such a step, and predicting the consequences with so much accuracy that he might almost seem to have been inspired by the gift of prophecy.* It is deeply to be regretted for the sake of France and of Europe that his counsels were not followed, and that

individual officer, even Berthier, I am informed, has left Buonaparte, whose predicament now can only deserve that pity which is extended by Christians to the most unfortunate of their fellow-creatures."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Paris, April* 6, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 449.

* "Very considerable apprehension has arisen, since his Imperial Majesty made the offer of the island of Elba to Napoleon Buonaparte, *as to the mischief and ultimate danger that may accrue if he is put in possession of it.* Its extreme proximity to the shores of Italy; the power and influence Buonaparte still has there; the popularity of Eugene Beauharnais; the possible tergiversation of Murat; once more, and finally, the number of discontented French who might follow Buonaparte's fortunes to that quarter—all these and more reasonings are adduced to throw great doubt on the policy of this arrangement.

"The misfortune to us at this moment is, that Buonaparte remains in existence. Saddled as the world must be with this fallen despot, it is of the utmost moment to place him where he never can disturb its repose again. *If he could escape into France, or get* possession of Italy, which would rather live under his sole dominion than be parcelled out as it is likely to be; *if he could carry French soldiers and followers into either country;* if his large pension is paid him, and if the other dangers to which I have alluded above are to be apprehended—it might be well to consider, before the act is irretrievable, whether a far less dangerous retreat might not be found, and whether *Napoleon may not bring the powder to the iron-mines which the island of Elba is so famed for.* It is of the greatest moment that this should be duly weighed; and I am most anxious for Lord Castlereagh's and Prince Metternich's arrival. The offer was made to Caulaincourt by the Emperor Alexander. Talleyrand and the Government much disapproved of it, and the more so the more it is considered."—SIR CHARLES STEWART *to* LORD BATHURST, *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 450, 451.

This letter, written on April 7, 1814, might pass for a *précis* of the events of April 1815.

Lord Castlereagh was not at hand to counterbalance by his moral resolution and strong sagacity the imprudent and somewhat theatrical generosity of the Emperor Alexander. What calamities might not have been averted: the arming of Europe—Waterloo—and the mutual infliction of injuries which could never be forgiven—which, in their ultimate results, cast down the Bourbons from the throne, and will affect the fortunes of Europe to the latest generation.

87. Negotiations with Murat and the Austrians in Italy.

While Sir Charles Stewart was engaged in negotiations attended with these momentous results at Paris, Lord Castlereagh was involved at Dijon in diplomatic communications by no means of an equally satisfactory character, but which came to have an important influence—ultimate influence—on the treaties in which the war finally terminated. These difficulties related chiefly to *Italy*—that beautiful region, the object of desire and ambition to all, and, on that account, in every age the theatre of warlike contention or of diplomatic dispute. The difficulties at this time arose chiefly from these causes: 1st, The talents and popularity of Prince Eugene, viceroy of Italy, and charged with the main direction of Napoleon's interests in the peninsula; 2d, The tergiversation and treachery of Murat, who, having entered into negotiations having for their object to betray Napoleon and conciliate the Allies, was veering with every change of fortune, and could not for a moment be trusted; 3d, The incapacity of the Austrian commander-in-chief, whose mismanagement and timidity threw away the principal advantages of the campaign; 4th, The "Whiggism," as Lord Castlereagh expressed it, of Lord William Bentinck, the commander-in-chief of the British troops in Sicily employed in the Italian war, who, deeply imbued with Liberal ideas, and naturally desirous of conciliating the inhabitants of these countries where his operations were carried on, had imprudently issued some proclamations, one in particular to the Genoese,

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promising them the entire restoration of their ancient form of government, contrary to the views of the Allies for the general settlement and independence of Europe. Lord Castlereagh was entirely free from blame in the matter, which proved not a little embarrassing when the affairs of Italy came to be adjusted in the year following at the Congress of Vienna; for, being aware of the Liberal propensities of Lord William, he especially enjoined him, in a despatch from Dijon on 30th March, to facilitate in every way the return of the King of Sardinia and Grand-duke of Tuscany to thir dominions, but "*to abstain studiously from encouraging any measure which might commit your Court or the Allies to the ultimate disposition of any other territories in the north of Italy, the destination of which must remain to be discussed upon a peace.*"* Notwithstanding this

* "I cannot dissemble from your Lordship my disappointment that the great superiority of force which the Allies possess over Marshal Beauharnais has not before this produced the results which, for the honour of the arms of the respective Powers and the ulterior objects of the war, we were entitled to expect from such ample and extended means. In your Lordship's intercourse with the Marshals Bellegarde and Murat, you will not conceal from them that such are the sentiments of the British Government, and that we conjure them by union and exertion no longer to suffer their great and commanding armies to be paralysed by an enemy so much their inferior. As the object is to promote union and put aside every minor consideration, I am to signify to your Lordship the Prince Regent's pleasure that you do make every effort to this effect, by lending yourself to whatever measures may best tend to combine the exertions of the Allied armies for the early expulsion of the enemy from Italy. For this purpose you will, to the utmost, conform to the views of Marshal Bellegarde, regulating at the same time your conduct towards Marshal Murat upon principles of cordiality and confidence; and, in order the better to effect this, and publicly to evince the desire felt by your Government zealously to unite their arms with his, your Lordship will select an officer of suitable rank and military talents to reside at the Neapolitan headquarters, whom you will direct to correspond with me and with your Lordship, as Sir R. Wilson at present does.

"Your Lordship is already fully apprised of the earnest interest the Prince Regent takes in the restoration of the King of Sardinia and the Grand-duke of Tuscany to their ancient dominions. You will give every aid to both; but *you will studiously abstain from encouraging any measure which might commit your Court or the Allies, with respect to the ultimate disposition of any of the other territories in the north of Italy, the destination of which must remain to be discussed upon a peace.*"—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK, *Dijon, March* 30, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 409, 410.

Lord Castlereagh again wrote to Lord William Bentinck from Dijon on 3d April: "There is one subject further upon which I deem it necessary to say a

emphatic caution, Lord William, on 26th April, issued a proclamation, in which he declared, "Considering that the general wish of the Genoese is to return to their ancient form of government, I declare, 1st, That the constitution of the Genoese states, as it existed in 1797, with those modifications which the general wish, the public good, and the spirit of the original constitution of 1797 seem to require, is re-established."[1] No one step in Lord Castlereagh's life occasioned him more obloquy than the departure from the promise thus imprudently made, which he had done nothing to authorise, but everything on the contrary to prevent.

[1] Lord W. Bentinck's Proclamation, April 26, 1814; Parl. Deb. xxx. 393, 394.

The usual difficulties consequent on success assailed Lord Castlereagh, at this period, in many quarters. The

few words—not that I entertain the smallest doubts as to your Lordship's own conduct being regulated in strict conformity to the present system of your Government, but as your Lordship very properly, and under orders from home, gave great countenance, at a former period, to the only system which, previous to the revival of the Continent, could afford a prospect of shaking the power of France, it is the more necessary, now that a different and better order of things has arisen, *to guard against any act or expression* which might countenance an idea that either your Lordship or your Court was actuated by *une arrière-pensée* inconsistent with the arrangements understood between the great Powers of Europe.

"In your Lordship's proclamation * there may perhaps be found an expression or two, which, separately taken, might create an impression that your views of Italian liberation *went to the form of the government* as well as to the expulsion of the French; but, taking its whole scope, and especially its opening and concluding paragraphs together, I cannot assent to the interpretation the Duke of Campochiaro, on the part of his Government, has attempted to give it. *But this and the incident of the colours prove how necessary it is, surrounded as your Lordship must be by individuals who wish for another system to be established in Italy, not to afford any plausible occasion or pretext for umbrage to those with whom we are acting*, but with whom our relations may not be such as at once to generate confidence. This course of policy, on your Lordship's part, will best enable us to put Marshal Murat's intentions effectually to the test, which can by no means be suffered to remain equivocal, and to reduce his conduct strictly within the circle of his obligations. Should your Lordship have brought any supply of arms with your expedition, I must particularly enjoin your Lordship not to employ them *in any loose or general armament of the people*. It is not insurrection we now want in Italy, or elsewhere—we want disciplined force under sovereigns we can trust."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK, *Dijon, April* 3, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 433, 434.

* The passage alluded to was in the proclamation, March 14, 1814: "Only call and we will hasten to your relief, and then Italy, by our united efforts, will become what she was in her prosperous days, and what Spain now is."—*Proclamation of* LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK, *March* 14, 1814; *Parliamentary Debates*, xxx. 393, 394.

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88. Difficulties in the Low Countries.

first arose in the Belgian provinces, where the deadly weed of religious intolerance had long flourished, and the inhabitants were in great part strongly averse to the Dutch Government, solely on the ground of its being Protestant. Out of 600 nobles summoned to the Assembly for approval of the constitution which had been drawn up for the United Kingdom, only 473 attended, and of these 25 voted against it. On the 29th March Lord Clancarty, the British minister at the Hague, wrote to Lord Castlereagh: "Our friends the Romanists have not been idle here. Not content with having all offices, civil and military, laid open to them, with the sole exception of the sovereignty itself, which the constitution determines shall be held by a person of the Reformed religion — not content with having this assured to them, and even an establishment secured for their clergy, they delivered in a remonstrance to the Notables against the clause securing a Protestant sovereign to the State. Such is and ever will be Popery, as long as an interested priesthood shall be enabled to work upon the fears and superstition of women, and through them to subjugate the stronger sense of men."[1] So early did the fatal germ of religious dissension appear in the Netherlands, which afterwards, with the aid of the French Revolution of 1830, split asunder the United Provinces, and gave the first grave shock to the arrangements so prolific of peace to Europe, made at the Congress of Vienna.

[1] Lord Clancarty to Lord Castlereagh, March 29, 1814; Cast. Cor. ix. 408.

89. Lord Castlereagh arrives at Paris, and his first act there.

Lord Castlereagh arrived at Paris on the 10th April, in time to take an important part in the weighty negotiations for a general peace which were then pending. His first care was to send his brother Sir Charles to the Duke of Wellington, in order to put him in possession of his views, and, if it could be accomplished without detriment to his army, to bring him back with Sir Charles to Paris, where he expressed a strong wish he should undertake the embassy.* He next concurred with the French

* "I shall express a strong wish to see him here, if he can manage it. I

Provisional Government in the expediency, as soon as possible, of signing the preliminaries of peace, in order to shorten the stay of the armies in France. For this purpose they justly regarded his presence there indispensable,* and he accordingly remained in Paris to conclude the negotiations.

90. Lord Castlereagh's views of the faults of the new constitution in France.

In the midst of all this triumph and exultation, it was every day becoming more apparent to the few sagacious observers who preserved their senses amidst the general whirl, that the proposed institutions for France were open to great exception, and far from being adapted to the existing state of society either there or in Europe. No one saw this more clearly than Lord Castlereagh, or prognosticated more distinctly the march of events that as yet lay buried in the womb of time. "The concession of the hereditary principle," said he, "to the existing senators, is a great fault. Had their functions and endowments been considered as personal and for life only, no fair objections could have been made. As it is, if they cannot reform this arrangement, they must add, progressively at least, a hundred more members to the *chambre haute;* these will neutralise the fagots. Deducting foreigners, senators without male heirs, and certain respectable persons,

wish he would at the outset undertake this embassy. His military name would give him and us the greatest ascendancy. His army may now return through France, delight the Parisians, and save their horses by passing at the ports of the narrow seas."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *Paris, April* 13, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 459.

* "The Provisional Government consider that the great object is to conclude preliminaries of peace with the least possible delay, in order to avoid the unfavourable impression which the protracted stay of the troops is likely to create in France. They at the same time feel that this can only be done with the King, and they have accordingly this day urged Monsieur to press his immediate arrival, and his acceptance of the Constitution, even with its faults, rather than risk the result of national discussions on political metaphysics. In the mean time we propose to sign with the Provisional Government a suspension of hostilities by sea and land, under certain modifications; and, further, to commence our deliberations upon the peace itself, so as to have it ready for signature upon the King's arrival. Under these circumstances I cannot hesitate to declare that I consider my continuing here, till this act is perfected, as indispensable."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *Paris, April* 13, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 459.

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the number of nearly unfit subjects will then be reduced to thirty or forty. I think this is the greatest practical fault they have committed. The article of the constitution respecting the *Culte* is ill-drawn. Toleration, and even endowment, was indispensable, the provision being already granted to all; but the wording seems to countenance equal endowment, which is absurd. The great object is for the King, without doing it in terms which might excite suspicion, to preserve to the three estates the clear and undisputed right of self-modification, without reference to primary assemblies. If the full prerogative of legislation is secured, and he is not in too great a hurry, either to innovate or obtrude the ancient families into too prominent notice, he will soon secure a strength amongst the men who have now the influence in their hands, which will effect his purpose."[1] At the same time, Mr Cooke wrote from the Foreign Office in London, a letter which is well deserving a place in this biography, from the clear insight it evinced into the future of coming events.*

[1] Lord Castlereagh to Lord Liverpool, Paris, April 20, 1814, Cast. Cor. ix. 481.

91. Difficulties with regard to Norway.

In the arrangements for the future settlement of Europe, NORWAY came to occupy a principal place, and it had now become environed with very serious difficulties. It had been promised by the Emperor Alexander to Bernadotte, during the conferences at Abo in 1812, when

* "We are all joy here. The only check to my feelings is the French Constitution. Such a House of Lords! without family, property, character! The court, the nobility, the people, must detest them; they may hope for the support of the armies. If the army can be detached from the Senate, it will fall. Were I a Bourbon, my first policy would be to get over the generals and the army; and, if they could be really secured, then to replace the Senate with the old nobility. The next thing I would do would be to pay the established religion only, and to increase the number and provision of the clergy. The clergy of France is by no means numerous enough for the purposes of religion or education. I was talking with La Rivière to-day, who was President of the Council of 500; he says *the constitution cannot last a year.* People lament here that the Emperor of Russia is so easily flattered away. *Despotism and Jacobinism!* The Opposition are in love with the Emperor. At the same time, the line which has been taken has been most happy, as it has brought everything to a termination without much bloodshed. They say Buonaparte *will be always ready at Elba to place himself at the head of any discontented party in any State bordering upon the Mediterranean.*"—EDWARD COOKE, ESQ., *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Foreign Office, April* 14, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 462.

Russia, pierced to the heart, stood in the utmost danger, and when the Crown Prince, by concluding an alliance with the Czar, and permitting the Russian troops in Finland to be transferred to reinforce the army of Count Wittgenstein, near Polotsk, contributed powerfully to the ultimate defeat of the French invasion. This engagement had been implemented by Great Britain and the other Allied Powers in 1813. The Emperor had never forgotten this obligation, which all the subsequent tortuous conduct of the Crown Prince had been unable to obliterate ; and such was his partiality for that successful adventurer, that down to the very last moment at Paris, he had serious thoughts of placing him on the throne of France, from which extraordinary project he was only diverted by the repeated assurances of Talleyrand, and Marshals Ney and Macdonald, that it would be to the last degree distasteful to the French nation. Though abundantly inclined to diplomatic finesse where his ministers only were concerned, the Emperor was scrupulously observant of his word when his private honour was pledged, and it certainly was so on this occasion. The Czar also was too powerful a party in the Confederacy, and had done too much for the common cause, to admit of his wishes being disregarded, especially in relation to arrangements on the shores of the Baltic. The Danish Government had, soon after the destruction of the French army in Russia, formally offered to abandon the French alliance, and accede to the Confederacy, on condition that Norway was guaranteed to them ; but although the balance then hung so even that it was of the utmost importance to secure this addition to the Allied side, the Emperor of Russia absolutely refused to accede to the terms proposed, and Denmark accordingly remained in the French alliance. The Cabinet of Copenhagen, therefore, having taken their part definitively in a combat *à l'outrance*, had no right to complain if they underwent the stern rule of war, *Væ victis*. But now the case was

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exceedingly and painfully complicated by the acts of the Norwegians themselves, who were as much attached to the Danish connection as they were animated by hereditary hatred to the Swedes, and were with mournful resolution preparing to defend themselves by force of arms, against whoever threatened their independence. Lord Castlereagh sympathised as warmly as any man with these gallant descendants of the Scandinavian heroes, but the circumstances would not admit of effect being given to this feeling, and all he could do was to recommend a decided part, in order to prevent the Norwegians from persevering in a hopeless contest.*

92. French prisoners of war in Great Britain at this period.

An important historical document has been brought to light in the *Castlereagh Correspondence*, eminently descriptive of the extraordinary successes of the British arms during the last years of the war. This is a return of the French, Danish, and American prisoners in Great Britain

* "Charles Jean has no great claim to favour; but as none of the Powers could well justify a breach of treaty to Sweden upon the grievances, and I must say strong suspicions, we are justified in entertaining of their general, *and as Russia perseveres in execution of her treaty*, I think we must, in good faith as well as policy, use our best endeavours to finish the business, without suffering the people of Norway to embark in a contest, in which we must at least navally fight against them, under the stipulations of our treaty. Murat is another sinner—whether to an extent that we can take notice of, I am not yet prepared to say; *but the Viceroy* [Eugene] *has given some strong evidence against him.* The events in France have secured us there. If the war had continued on this side of the Alps, Italy would have soon become a dangerous card, which was in itself a new source of alarm, intrigue, and weakness."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD BATHURST, *April* 27, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 512.

"I see no difficulty in executing this measure *now*, as far as the Prince of Sweden is concerned. *We owe him no compliments*, and he has business enough in Norway to look after. In this object, for our own sakes, we must assist him. We cannot punish the Swedes for his fault; and hesitation in our mode of acting will only add to our own difficulties, by encouraging the Norwegians to persevere. This is the feeling both of Russia and Austria. There is no other Allied sovereign that can take offence; and the line draws itself when confined to the four great Powers who have conducted the whole. The conduct of Austria has been throughout so good, under difficult circumstances, and recently so very distinguished, that the Prince will raise himself and his Government by re-echoing the general sentiments; and I can assure you that the influence of Austria in France not only has been, but still is, of immense importance in the completion of our work. It is still more important to our views in the Netherlands. You may command her entire exertions on both points by good management, and without any sacrifice."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *Paris, April* 20, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 479.

at its close, being the only Powers with whom Great Britain was then in a state of hostility. They were in all 76,830, of whom 67,360 were native French. The cost of maintaining them was £100,000 a-month, which fell as a burden entirely on the British Government, as Napoleon would neither consent to an exchange of prisoners on reasonable terms, nor remit anything for their maintenance. The entire British prisoners in France at the same period were only a few thousands, and they were entirely supported by their own Government. No facts can be imagined more characteristic of the opposite principles and tenor of the respective Governments.*

93. Difficulty about the fleet at Antwerp.

When the negotiations for the terms of peace began in good earnest, a difficulty which at first sight threatened to be very serious, arose about the fleet at Antwerp. It was unanimously agreed to take the Chatillon *projet* as the basis of the negotiation; but that basis said nothing about the ultimate disposal of the ships, but only that they should not go to France; and the complexion of the case had entirely changed since the Bourbons had returned to the throne, and it was an object to give the terms demanded as much of a generous and friendly air with them as possible. Naturally, as Antwerp was ceded to Holland and the united arms of England and Prussia, the ships should have belonged to these Powers as public

* STATEMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR IN BRITAIN AND ABROAD, April 10, 1814.

| | On Parole. | In Prison. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|
| French prisoners, . . . | 3,594 | 63,766 | 67,360 |
| Danish „ . . . | 49 | 1,296 | 1,345 |
| American „ . . . | 101 | 3,492 | 3,593 |
| In Britain, . . . . | 3,744 | 68,554 | 72,298 |
| Prisoners abroad, . . . | 221 | 4,311 | 4,532 |
| Total, . . | 3,965 | 72,865 | 76,830 |

"Under any circumstances, I do not suppose that you would think of detaining the French prisoners here, *at an expense of about* £100,000 *per month*, beyond the signature of the preliminary articles; though, I believe, they have usually been liberated finally on a definitive treaty only."—LORD MELVILLE (First Lord of the Admiralty) *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Admiralty, April* 21, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 487.

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military spoil. But when France came under the Bourbon rule the case was entirely changed. The Emperor Alexander, whose generous heart was enamoured of noble actions, was urgent with Lord Castlereagh to allow the fleet to return to France on the principle that it would go far to reconcile the people of the country to their new governors. Without expressing a decided opinion on this point, which was of great importance to the future position of France as a naval power, Lord Castlereagh contented himself with stating the case and referring its decision to the Cabinet at home, expressing, at the same time, an opinion that it might be conceded. On the general terms of peace there was no disagreement. It was unanimously resolved to give to France her old frontier and territory, with a small addition on the side of Savoy and the Palatinate; and that the Allied forces should evacuate the fortresses they had conquered in old France, at the same time that the French troops retired from those they still held beyond the Rhine.*

The affairs of Italy at this period wore so unpromising

* "As to peace, we have agreed to enter upon its negotiation with Talleyrand under full powers from Monsieur, in order that it may be ready for signature on the King's arrival. With respect to the nature of the arrangement, we shall all be agreed to take our Chatillon *projet* as the basis; but in the present state of things there is just cause for some modification; and there is disposition in the Emperor of Russia *inconveniently to favour a relaxation in our demands.* As far as I can judge, we shall be unanimously disposed to strip the arrangement of anything bearing upon it the character of particular distrust. We propose to admit the French ambassador to the general congress; and, having the English restitutions necessarily in hand as a security for the peace, we are disposed, by the convention for the suspension of hostilities, to allow the evacuation of old France by the Allied troops, and of the fortresses beyond those limits by the French troops, to go hand in hand.

"In this part of the case I foresee the fleet at Antwerp will make the practical difficulty. I see the general feeling will be *against* our refusing to France liberty, as circumstances now stand, to withdraw those ships. The Emperor of Russia has already expressed to me his hope that this would not be pressed. In the other instances of fortresses to be surrendered, the French garrisons are to be allowed to evacuate *as friends*, and not as *enemies*, taking with them their arms and military equipment, leaving only what is considered, in military phrase, *les dotations de la place.* The reasoning will be—if the army is suffered so to retire, why not the navy? The former keeping their arms, the latter, in parity of reasoning, are entitled to retain and retire with their ships. This is not very correct logic; but the maintenance of the opposite principle will be

94. Untoward aspect of affairs in Italy in the end of April.

an aspect, and had become so complicated by the incapacity of the Austrian commander-in-chief, the treachery and ambiguous conduct of Murat, and the imprudent and unauthorised proclamation of Lord W. Bentinck, that, had a general peace not been concluded and hostilities resumed, it might have become a very serious cause of embarrassment to the Allied Powers. The reason was, that Murat, having first been a traitor to his country and his benefactor, and openly joined the Allied cause, was determined nevertheless not to commit himself irrevocably by commencing hostilities against the French, till the signature of the Allied sovereigns or their ambassadors was appended to a treaty securing to him his dominions.

unpleasant against the temper of the Allies, and the enforcing it by siege now still more so. I wish, therefore, to know your feelings upon this point—whether you are disposed to reserve it as a distinct question for negotiation, meaning to give it up ultimately, if everything else is satisfactorily settled, as a mark of generosity to the nation; or, whether you see any and what modification to the question.

"You will recollect *we* never claimed the ships for ourselves; *we* considered them as the right of the captors. The engagement I obtained was, that they should follow the fate of the place, and not go to France; but this stipulation *was against Buonaparte, not against the Bourbons.* I am afraid we cannot now press this point without much odium. The value of the ships is in itself no great object. I understood from the Brabant deputies they were perishing fast, being built of green wood. If you can reconcile feelings to the measure, I myself doubt the expediency of making this point a *sine qua non* as matters now stand in Europe. . . .

"With respect to the future limits of France, I hope the Emperor will not be disposed to press any departure from the ancient frontier which, in a military point of view, can be objectionable. The flat part of Savoy not affecting the line of the Alps and Avignon, are the augmentation to which, from the first discussions at Chatillon, it was thought France might be suffered not unreasonably to aspire. I believe, upon similar principles, something in the Palatinate had been thought of; but this must depend upon German arrangements. *With respect to the power of France so augmented, I see no present cause for alarm;* and there is a strong motive for giving to our peace with the Bourbons somewhat of a more liberal complexion. With respect to our own peace, I consider Malta, the Cape, Mauritius, and Tobago, a *sine qua non;* also the regulations limiting the French to a commercial occupation of their factories in the East Indies. I should wish, as at present circumstanced, not to press the Saintes. It is not worth swelling the catalogue with a demand of this nature. . . . *I am inclined to a liberal line upon subordinate questions, having secured the Continent, the ancient family, and the leading features of our own peace.* I still feel great doubts about the acquisition in sovereignty of so many Dutch colonies. I am sure our reputation on the Continent, as a feature of strength, power, and confidence, is of more real moment to us than an acquisition thus made."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *April* 19, 1814; *Cast. Cor.* ix. 472-475.

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This they hesitated to give, both because there was no security in coming to an arrangement with such a character, and because it was as yet uncertain what the views of the Allied sovereigns might be in regard to the restitution of the legitimate King of Naples to his territories. Meanwhile Murat, with an army, fine at least in appearance, of 40,000 men, lay inactive on the southern bank of the Po, ready at a moment's warning to take part, with decisive effect, in favour of either of the combatants, *but it was as yet uncertain which.* Bellegarde, the Austrian commander-in-chief, was at the head of a gallant army 50,000 strong; but Eugene still had 36,000 under his banners, and the Austrian marshal was not a man of the energy requisite to make head against such a combination of difficulties. To add to the embarrassment, Lord William Bentinck, as already mentioned, had taken possession of Genoa, and issued proclamations promising the restoration of the ancient form of government, and was writing despatches portraying the aversion of the people to an annexation to Piedmont.* In these circumstances, there is no saying what might have ensued if matters had not in the interim taken a decisive turn in Paris, and the affairs of Italy had not been determined by the events of which it had been the theatre.[1]

[1] Sir R. Wilson's War in 1813 and 1814.

While the Allied sovereigns and ministers were experiencing there the usual attendants on great and decisive success, Fontainebleau was a scene of the most disgraceful treachery and tergiversation ever perhaps witnessed in

* "I hope from the course the Viceroy is pursuing, that Italy will wind up well. He is the best of the Buonaparte school, and has played an honourable and able part. If Buonaparte had been enabled to maintain himself in the field in France, between Murat's rascality, Bellegarde's timidity, and Lord William Bentinck's impracticability and Whiggism, which seems to follow him everywhere, we should have been in danger of a serious disappointment in that quarter. As it is, we are masters, I hope, of the question now, in a military sense, and must weigh well the political complications, which are not merely personal to the sovereign claimants, but mixed up with a great deal of internal and extensive jealousy amongst the mass of the Italian population." —LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *April* 27, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 509, 510.

the history of the world. Napoleon published an order of the day to the army, in which he severely stigmatised the conduct of Marshal Marmont and the Senate; but in misfortune the example of defection is contagious, and it was only the more readily followed by all around him.* The baseness of his courtiers and ministers would seem incredible if not attested by the unexceptionable testimony of an eyewitness. "Every hour," says Caulaincourt, "was marked by fresh voids in the Emperor's household. The universal object was to get first to Paris. All the persons in office quitted their post without either asking or obtaining leave; one after another, they all slipped away, totally forgetting him to whom they owed everything, but had no longer anything to give. The universal complaint was that the formal abdication was so long of appearing. 'It is high time,' said every one, 'for all this to come to an end; it is absolute childishness to

95. Universal defection at Fontainebleau and Blois from the Emperor and Empress.

* "The Emperor thanks the army for the attachment which it has manifested towards him, and chiefly because it has recognised the great principle that France is to be found in him, and not in the people of the capital. The soldier follows the fortune or misfortune of his general; his honour is his religion. The Duke of Ragusa has not inspired his companions in arms with that sentiment: he has passed over to the Allies. The Emperor cannot approve the condition on which he has taken that step; he cannot accept life and liberty from the mercy of a subject. The Senate has allowed itself to dispose of the government of France; it forgets that it owes to the Emperor the power it has now abused; that it was he who saved a part of its members from the storms of the Revolution, drew it from obscurity, and protected it against the hatred of the nation. The Senate founds on the articles of the constitution to overturn it, without adverting to the fact that, as the first branch in the state, it took part in these very acts. A sign from me was a mandate to the Senate, which was always ready to outstrip my wishes. The Senate speaks of the reproaches the Emperor has addressed to foreign nations: it forgets they were drawn up by itself. As long as fortune was faithful to their sovereign, they were faithful; and not a whisper was heard against any abuse of power. If the Emperor despised them, as they now reproach him with having done, the world will see whether or not he had reasons for his opinion. He held his dignity from God and the nation; they alone were entitled to deprive him of it. He always considered it as a burden; and when he accepted it, it was in the conviction that he alone was able to bear its burden. The happiness of France appeared to be indissolubly wound up with the fortunes of the Emperor; now that fortune has decided against him, the will of the nation can alone induce him to remain upon the throne. If he is really the only obstacle to peace, he willingly gives himself up as a sacrifice for France."—*Proclamation of* NAPOLEON, *5th April* 1814; FAIN, 225-227.

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remain any longer in the antechambers of Fontainebleau, when favours are showering down at Paris;' and with that they all set off for the capital. Such was their anxiety to hear of his abdication that they pursued misfortune even into its last asylum; and every time the door of the Emperor's cabinet opened, a crowd of heads were seen peeping in to gain the first hint of the much-wished-for news."[1] No sooner was the abdication and the treaty with the Allies signed than the *desertion was universal.* Every person of note around the Emperor, with the honourable exceptions of Maret, Caulaincourt, and Macdonald, abandoned him. The antechambers of the palace were literally deserted. Berthier even left his benefactor without bidding him adieu. "He was born a courtier," said Napoleon, when he heard of his departure; "you will see my vice-constable mendicating employment from the Bourbons. I feel mortified that men who have risen so high in the estimation of Europe should sink so low. There is no Tartar who would not deem himself dishonoured by such baseness. Think of Moscow and its splendid palaces thrown as a holocaust to the country." Marie Louise at Blois was even more deserted. When she got into her carriage to leave that place for Vienna, none remained to hand her in but her own chamberlain. Compare this with the unbought loyalty of La Vendée, the steady fidelity of the Tyrol, the voluntary flames of Moscow, and say whether the national virtues are improved by the march of intellect and triumph of revolutions.[2]*

[1] Caul. ii. 40, 68, 69.

[2] Savary, vii. 115, 119; Fain, 233-235.

* One important event, which belongs more to the private biography of Napoleon than these Memoirs, occurred at this period. Overwhelmed by misfortune, shocked at the baseness and treachery of all around him, and despairing of the future, he resolved to commit suicide. His iron will could not bend, but it was broken. Ever since the battle of Malo-Jaroslawitz in Russia, where he had narrowly escaped being made prisoner by the Cossacks, he had carried about with him a strong poison, prepared by Dr Ivan, for a similar contingency. On the night of the 11th April, the day on which the preliminaries of peace were signed at Paris, he drew the fatal potion from its place of concealment, and, after mixing it with water, swallowed the whole. He then threw himself on his bed, and closed his eyelids, expecting to open them no more. The poison, however, from having been so long kept, had lost somewhat of its power, and he had strength left to call M. de Caulaincourt to give him his

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In the midst of this universal and unparalleled baseness, it is refreshing to have one noble and herioc scene to refer to, which redeems in some degree the lost honour of human nature. On the 20th April, all things being in readiness for his departure to the island of Elba, Napoleon descended the great stair of the palace of Fontainebleau, and, advancing into the middle of the square of the Old Guard, which was drawn up ready to receive him, he said, amidst breathless silence and tearful eyes, "Soldiers of my Old Guard, I bid you adieu! During twenty years I have ever found you on the path of honour and glory. In our dark days, as in those of our prosperity, you have never ceased to be models of bravery and fidelity. With such men as you, our cause could never have been lost; but the contest would have been interminable: it would have turned into a civil war, and France must have become daily more unhappy. I have therefore sacrificed all our interests to those of our country. I depart; but you remain to serve France. Its happiness was my only thought; it will always be the object of my wishes. Lament not my lot; if I have consented to survive myself, it was that I might contribute to your glory. I am about to write the great deeds we have done together. Adieu, my children! I would I could press you all to my heart, but I will at least press the eagle." At these words, General Petit advanced with the eagle; Napoleon received the general in his arms, and after kissing the standard, said, with a voice almost

96. Adieu of Fontainebleau. April 20.

last instructions. The latter found him hardly able to articulate, and apparently in the agonies of death. He was soon seized with violent spasms, the last efforts of expiring nature, but they brought on a fit of vomiting, which relieved his stomach of the greater part of the poison. Napoleon entreated the bystanders to give him another dose, but they positively refused; and by degrees, though suffering severely from spasms in the stomach, he recovered. He repeatedly said when he regained his senses, "How difficult it is to die when it is so easy on the field of battle. Ah! why did I not die at Arcis-sur-Aube?" At length he said to Dr Ivan, who was at his bedside, "The dose was not strong enough—God did not will it;" and fell asleep. He wakened in two hours, pale and haggard: but the effects of the poison had gone off.—*See* THIERS, xvii. 804, 805; NAPOLEON, *in* MONTHOLON, ii. 37; FAIN, 241; CONSTANT, vi. 85.

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inarticulate with emotion, "Adieu, once again, my old companions! May this last embrace penetrate all your hearts." With these words he tore himself away amidst the sobs and tears of all around him. Never was a great career more nobly terminated. And yet such is the fickleness of human nature, such was the abhorrence in which the Emperor, *when in misfortune*, was held in France, that not only was he publicly insulted on many occasions during his progress through the southern provinces, but on one he escaped death at the hand of his own subjects, by riding post in the uniform of an Austrian courier.[1]

[1] Fain, 250-252; Thiers, xvii. 831, 832.

97. Treaty of April 11, 1814.

Lord Castlereagh's arrival at Paris, on the 10th April from Dijon, was the signal for the signature of the preliminaries of peace, which was done on the day following. Little remained to be adjusted in this treaty, for Napoleon having resigned, and the King not arrived from England, it could be agreed to only by the provisional Government at Paris, and necessarily bore a temporary character. By it the Emperor Napoleon, by his commissioners, Ney and Macdonald, renounced for himself *and his descendants* the empire of France and kingdom of Italy; but he was himself to retain the title of Emperor, and his mother, brothers, and sisters, those of Princes and Princesses. The island of Elba was assigned to the ex-Emperor as his place of residence; and for that end it was erected into an independent principality in his favour. The duchies of Parma and Placentia were secured in full sovereignty during her life to the Empress Marie-Louise, and after her decease to the King of Rome, her son. An annual revenue of 2,500,000 francs (£100,000) were to be paid annually to the ex-Emperor, to be defrayed from the revenues of the countries ceded, and 2,000,000 more (£80,000) annually to be inscribed on the grand livre of France, and defrayed from its revenues. The Empress Dowager, Josephine, was secured in an annuity of 1,000,000 francs (£40,000) annually, to be also inscribed on the grand livre of France. All

the movable property of the Emperor and his family was to remain with the present proprietors, except the furniture of the palaces and diamonds of the crown, which were to revert to the King of France. Fifteen hundred of the Old Guard were to attend the Emperor to his place of embarkation, and he was to be allowed to take 400 with him to form a body-guard in the island of Elba. The whole Poles in the service of France were to be at liberty to return to their own country with their arms and baggage. This treaty, which was merely between Napoleon, personally, and the Allies, had affixed to it the signatures of Caulaincourt, Macdonald, Ney, Metternich, Nesselrode, and Hardenberg; Lord Castlereagh acceded to it, "but only to be binding upon his Britannic Majesty, with respect to his *own acts*, but not with respect to the acts of third parties." The fact was, he very much disapproved of the treaty, both as recognising the title of Emperor in Napoleon, which Great Britain had never yet done, and as assigning him an independent sovereignty on the shores of Italy, and within a few days' sail of France, where the revolutionary passions were still rife in both countries.[1] *

[1] See Treaty in Martens, Sup. i. 696.

98. Arrival of Wellington at Paris, and his reception there as Ambassador.

Sir Charles Stewart returned to Paris from Toulouse on the 26th of April, bringing with him Wellington's answer to the proposal of Lord Castlereagh to confer upon him the office of Ambassador at Paris, of vital importance in the approaching deliberations, which he accepted.† Nothing remained now, but to prosecute the

* "I have given the accession to the treaty of the 11th, *in the form received from Lord Bathurst.* I did not feel it necessary *now* to provoke the question of the ultimate destination of Elba after Napoleon's death. I think the form and nature of our peace will of itself preclude its becoming French, which, I conceive, is your main object."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *April* 27, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 510.

† "Lord Castlereagh, considering the importance, under the present auspicious change that has taken place in the general system of Europe, as well as in the government of France, that the embassy to Paris should be intrusted by your Royal Highness to a character of preponderating influence in the public estimation, presumes to recommend that your Royal Highness would authorise him to propose this trust, in your Royal Highness's

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negotiations with the utmost activity, and the conclusion of an armistice in Italy, between the Viceroy and Marshal Bellegarde, which Sir R. Wilson, the British envoy, then reported, greatly facilitated this object. The conduct of Murat had been so ambiguous and suspicious, like that of Bernadotte, as to deprive him of all confidence or respect on the part of the Allied Powers.* The visit of Sir Charles Stewart to Wellington at Toulouse, was in the highest degree delightful to both. The two soldiers had much to speak of; each had seen and done great things since they had parted on the banks of the Agueda, two years before. The one had struck the blows at Salamanca and Vitoria, which had delivered the Peninsula; the other had assisted at those at Leipsic and Paris, which had rescued Europe. The communication between them was of the most unreserved and confidential kind; and Sir Charles then communicated to his former commander his serious apprehensions at the consequence of fixing Napoleon so near both France and Italy, as in the island of Elba.[1] Wellington soon followed Sir Charles Stewart to Paris, where he arrived on the 4th May.† He was received with loud applause by the volatile Parisians; and the cries of "Vive Wellington!" when

[1] Sir Chas. Stewart to Lord Castlereagh, April 13, 1814, MS.

name, to Field-Marshal the Marquess of Wellington, whose zeal and invariable devotion to your Royal Highness's service, will, Lord Castlereagh persuades himself, on this, as on every other occasion, determine him to obey your Royal Highness's commands."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to the* PRINCE REGENT, *April* 27, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 511.

* "I enclose a letter from Sir Robert Wilson, which contains an account of the conditions of an armistice between the Viceroy of Italy and Marshal Bellegarde. I trust that this convention may lead to a satisfactory settlement of the complicated questions which are involved in the present state of Italy. It appears, however, that Murat's conduct has *been most equivocal and suspicious;* and I shall take an early opportunity of writing to your Lordship more at length upon this subject."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *April* 27, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 510.

† "Lord Wellington arrived yesterday without notice, in time to see the Russian and Prussian Guards defile by Louis XVIII. The Emperor of Russia visited him in the evening; and he afterwards appeared at a ball given by my brother Charles, where he was the great object of admiration. He looks perfectly well, and does not show the effects of his campaigns as much as I expected in his countenance."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *May* 5, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 9.

he made his first appearance at the opera in the French capital, were as loud as ever those of "Vive l'Empereur!" had been in the plenitude of his imperial power.*

99. Difficulties of the negotiation for peace, so far as France and the other Powers of Europe were concerned.

The conferences of the ministers, however, soon showed that, though the terms of peace were sufficiently obvious, so far as France and England were concerned, yet it would be no easy matter to adjust the conflicting claims of the different Powers which had been engaged with her in the contest. Security for the future, not either conquest or revenge, having been the object, and the sole object, of Great Britain in the war, this point was completely gained by the reduction of France to its ancient limits, and the Napoleon dynasty being displaced, which was a standing menace to the other states of Europe. But the case was very different as between France and the other European Powers. Talleyrand adopted and again urged Napoleon's favourite argument, so often put forward by Caulaincourt, that the strength of the other Continental states, particularly England and Russia, had been so much augmented during the conflict that the balance of power would no longer exist if, while they retained their acquisitions, France was to be reduced to her ancient limits. In addition to this, the rival pretensions and claims of the victorious Allies were still more at variance, and more likely to lead to serious divisions. Prussia put forward her claims to be raised to the rank of a first-rate power, and increased to at least ten millions of inhabitants, in consideration of her unparalleled efforts during the war. It was felt by all that these claims were well founded; but from whence the territories were to come which were to raise her to that rank, was not so apparent. The necessity of erecting Belgium into a respectable power, as a barrier to Northern Germany against France, was evident; but Austria claimed with justice indemnification for the loss of her pro-

* The author was present on the occasion. The manner of the English hero in bowing his acknowledgments was constrained and embarrassed, probably from an apprehension that the display might prejudice the Bourbons.

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vinces in the Low Countries, and it could be found only in Italy, where it could be obtained only by the annexation of some of the lesser states, all of which were loudly claiming restitution and independence. The difficulties of the settlement of Italy were much enhanced by the imprudent proclamations, already mentioned, of Lord William Bentinck, promising the restoration of their old government to the Genoese; and Lord Castlereagh, who clearly foresaw the dangerous spirit which was arising in the Italian Peninsula, was soon obliged, under pretence of leave of absence, to recall him.* Finally, Russia, whose ambitious designs upon Poland were well known, hung like a dark cloud over the Vistula; and the other Powers of Europe, aware of the danger, were fain to avert a question which would certainly divide, and might possibly break up, the Grand Alliance.

100. Convention on April 23 for evacuation of all the French conquests.

Pressed by so many difficulties, and anxious at the same time, to make some steps in advance towards the general pacification and final settlement, the sovereigns and ministers resolved to conclude a peace, in the first instance with France, and leave the ulterior and more difficult question as to the distribution of the territories conquered from her to a future time, to be adjusted in a general congress which

* "I shall take care not to compromise any of the parties referred to in your secret letter. I fully approve of your giving the project no countenance; nor can I bring myself to wish that the too extensive experiment already in operation throughout Europe in the science of government, should be at once augmented by similar creations in Italy.

"*It is impossible not to perceive a great moral change coming on in Europe,* and that the principles of freedom are in full operation. The danger is, that the transition may be too sudden to open into anything likely to make the world better or happier. We have new constitutions launched in France, Spain, Holland, and Sicily. *Let us see the result before we encourage further attempts.* The attempts may be made, and we must abide the consequences; but I am sure it is better to retard than accelerate the operation of this most hazardous principle which is abroad.

"In Italy it is now the more necessary to abstain, if we wish to act in concert with Austria and Sardinia. Whilst we had to drive the French out of Italy we were justified in running all risks; but the present state of Europe requires no such expedient; and with a view to general peace and tranquillity, I should prefer seeing the Italians await the insensible influence of what is going on elsewhere, than hazard their own internal quiet by an effort at this moment."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD W. BENTINCK, *Paris, May* 7, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence,* x. 18.

was to meet in Vienna. This being arranged, matters advanced with an accelerated pace. It being a fundamental principle of the pacification that France should abandon all her conquests beyond the limits of 1792, a convention was signed on 23d April, providing for the mutual evacuation of the French territory by the Allied troops, and of the whole French conquests since the Revolution, by their forces. This evacuation forthwith commenced, and the territories and fortresses evacuated, conveyed a stupendous idea of the magnitude of the French revolutionary conquests, and the infatuated policy of Napoleon in having immured so large a part of his forces in those distant strongholds when his empire was perishing from want of soldiers in its centre. In nine only of the fortresses ceded, were 92,200 soldiers, nearly all experienced veterans, and the guns delivered up were above 12,000!* Thus was the external force of France lost in the outposts of the empire, when, with not more than 70,000 men, he was crushed by 200,000 on the banks of the Seine! Nor is there any foundation for the obvious remark, that if Napoleon had drawn back the garrisons of the blockaded fortresses the Allied armies would have been as much strengthened by the blockading forces as his would be by the garrisons withdrawn;[1] for the French garrisons were veteran troops,

[1] Schoell, x. 442; Martens, N. Recueil, i. 706; Thiers, xviii. 71-73.

* Garrisons of the following fortresses when they were surrendered, viz.:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Hamburg, | 12,200 |
| Magdeburg, | 16,000 |
| Wesel, | 10,000 |
| Mayence, | 15,000 |
| Barcelona, | 6,000 |
| Antwerp, | 17,500 |
| Mantua, | 6,000 |
| Alessandria, | 5,500 |
| Bergen-op-Zoom, | 4,000 |
| For nine fortresses, | 92,200 |

Besides, there were in the hands of the French, at the date of this treaty, Maestricht, Luxembourg, Kehl, Flushing, Ostend, Nieuport, Peschiera, Gavi, Turin, Figueras, Rosas, Tortosa, and many others, the garrisons of which were at least 50,000 more. Fifty-three fortresses beyond the frontiers of old France in all were abandoned, with 12,000 guns, and at least 140,000 men.—See SCHOELL, *Traités de Paix*; MARTENS, *Nouveau Recueil*, i. 706.

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capable of acting with the greatest effect in the field, while the blockading forces were nearly all landwehr or landsturm, incapable of moving from the spot, or taking an active part in the general operations of a campaign.

101. Definitive treaty. May 30.

This convention settled nearly all the important questions depending between France and the Allied Powers, and rendered it comparatively an easy matter to arrange the definitive treaty. In spite, therefore, of Talleyrand's objections, it was signed on 30th May, and, considering the circumstances, in terms eminently favourable to France. Not only was nothing taken from that country as she stood at the commencement of the war, but she received in clear gain Avignon and the Venaisin, the first conquests of the Revolution, with a territory peopled by 450,000 souls, and Chambery. The additions conceded to France on all her frontiers amounted together to about 1,000,000 souls. Holland was to remain an independent state, under the house of Orange, and increased by the union with Flanders. Germany was to be no longer an empire, but a great confederacy arranged in a federal union. Switzerland was to be independent, and governed by its own Diet, under the guarantee of the Allied Powers. Italy, beyond the Austrian possessions, and to the French frontier, was divided into independent states. Malta, the original ostensible cause of the renewal of the war after the rupture of the treaty of Amiens, was to be ceded in perpetuity, with all its dependencies, to Great Britain, as were Tobago and St Lucie, in the West, and the Mauritius in the East Indies. All the other colonies, being the whole belonging to France, which had been conquered during the war, were restored by Great Britain, with the exception of the Spanish part of St Domingo, which was to be restored to Spain. France resigned the right of fishing on the coast of Newfoundland and in the Gulf of the St Lawrence.[1] The fleet at Antwerp, which consisted of thirty-eight ships of the line and fifteen frigates, was to be divided into three parts, two of which were to go to France, and one-third to Holland.

[1] Martens, N. Recueil, ii. 1; Schoell, x. 495, 496; Thiers, xviii. 144, 160.

The ships taken, however, before the conclusion of the war, and especially those at the Texel, consisting of eight sail of the line, were to remain with the Allies, and were immediately made over to Holland. All subordinate matters of detail were, by common consent, devolved upon a congress, to meet at Vienna in the succeeding autumn.

102. The secret treaty.

In addition to the public treaty a secret one was signed at the same time, which contained articles of considerable importance. They related chiefly to the disposal of the immense territories, containing not less than 15,360,000 inhabitants, which had been severed from the French Empire, besides 16,000,000 more inhabiting its external dependencies. The details of the arrangements connected with this important subject were left to future adjustment, but the principle was recognised, that they should be distributed by the four Allied Powers, in such a way as to strengthen considerably the *lesser Powers contiguous to France*, as to lessen the chance of the French troops being able to get into these lesser states without any serious opposition, and making them the battle-field in which to conquer or from which to menace the independence of the other states. For this purpose it was agreed that the basis of the reconstruction of Europe should be that Flanders and Holland should be united into one monarchy, with at least 6,000,000 of inhabitants; that the Rhenish provinces should be annexed to Prussia; that the reconstruction of Switzerland, in nineteen cantons, should be recognised, and its independence guaranteed by France; that the Austrian possessions in Italy should be bounded by the Ticino and the Po; and that Genoa, with its adjacent territory, should be united to Piedmont. The fate of Saxony and Poland was, by common consent, and a secret dread of new dissensions to which their destinies would give rise, adjourned to the congress at Vienna.[1]

[1] Cap. Cent Jours, i. 17, 18; Hard. xii. 416; Thiers, xvii. 150, 151.

103. Visit of the sovereigns to London.

After the signature of this treaty the foreign sovereigns agreed to make a visit of congratulation to the British capital. The Emperor Alexander of course would form

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the leading character on this occasion; but although, with his usual highbred courtesy, that sovereign always when in company with the Emperor of Austria placed himself in the second line, yet Lord Castlereagh was aware of the incipient jealousies getting up between the Allied sovereigns, and was most anxious not only that an earnest invitation should be sent to the Emperor of Austria, but that he should be assigned an important place in the imperial pageant.* They came, accordingly, with the exception of the Emperor of Austria, who was obliged to return to his dominions, and were received by the Prince Regent and the whole inhabitants of London with a degree of magnificence and enthusiasm which exceeded all imagination. The fête given to Alexander by the city of London alone cost £20,000. Marshal Blucher was an extraordinary object of interest on all these occasions, to which his striking countenance and huge mustaches, not so common then as they have since become, not a little contributed. Sir Charles Stewart accompanied his gallant commander and fellow-soldier on all these festive occasions, and shared with him the applause of the multitude. He received at the same time the most flattering marks of approbation from his sovereign and the Government. He was the only individual present when the Prince Regent, with so much grace, personally invested the Emperor of Russia with the robes of the Garter, of which illustrious order he had been made a member. And on the steps, at the grand fête at Guildhall, given by the city of London, on 17th June, he knelt down to kiss his hands on receiving the appointments of a Lord of the Bedchamber

June 17.

* "When I recommend you to dilute the libation to Russia, I am the last to wish it should be less palatable. The Emperor has the greatest merit, and must be held high; but he ought to be *grouped*, and not made the sole feature for admiration. . . . The Emperor of Russia, from various circumstances, exploits, manners, &c., must make his brother Emperor, though the first in rank, the second in *éclat*. He always, however, personally treats the Emperor of Austria with the most perfect attention, placing himself *en seconde ligne*."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *April* 20, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ix. 479, 480.

and Ambassador at Vienna; the latter a situation of the very highest importance, as that capital had been fixed on as the seat of the approaching congress, where the most important diplomatic affairs ever brought in Europe under discussion were to be determined. This appointment was accompanied by the strongest expressions of the Prince Regent's entire satisfaction with his whole conduct, both civil and military. Bernadotte, much to his credit, had some time before conferred upon him the Grand Cross of the Swedish military Order of the Sword.[1]

[1] Conservative Statesmen (Lond.), pp. 6, 7; Cast. Cor. i. 27-29.

104. Honours bestowed on Lord Castlereagh, and discussion in Parliament on the Peace.

Lord Castlereagh received shortly after the highest proof of the approbation of his Government and sovereign, by being decorated with the Order of the Garter, a distinction rarely, if ever, bestowed, except upon crowned heads or persons of the very highest rank or celebrity. A testimony to his merit and public services, still more memorable and flattering, was borne by the House of Commons on occasion of the discussion (for it could not be called a debate) on the treaty of peace on 29th June 1814. The address to the Crown, congratulatory of the treaty, was then agreed to without a division. On that occasion Lord Castlereagh said, "All the imputations, that we had engaged in the war or continued it for purposes of selfish ambition, have been removed. The conduct of Great Britain has been vindicated: it has been proved that she entered into the war from nothing short of an over-ruling necessity; and that she was ready to relinquish everything of which, for her own security, she had been obliged to take possession, as soon as it had become manifest she could make that sacrifice without danger. If the country has for twenty years sustained the most severe burdens, and done so with a noble fortitude, it is at least gratifying for her to find that she has come out of the tremendous conflict in which she has been engaged with the acquisition of that security for which she contended, and with a reputation unstained by reproval. She bravely stood by the Powers of Europe

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in circumstances of unprecedented peril; feeling that it was her duty to enter the lists in defence of all those moral and political principles which were endangered, abstaining from too cautious and minute a calculation of the chances of the conflict, and leaving the result to Providence. We have thus, Sir, at length closed the war as conquerors certainly, but enjoying the rare felicity of receiving the benedictions not only of those with whom we fought, but ultimately of those against whom we fought. There is no feeling more powerful in Paris at this moment than respect for the English character. And thus, I trust, that the course we have pursued through the whole of this eventful crisis will prove permanently beneficial to the whole world. I trust that feelings of mutual kindness have come to supplant those of animosity in all ranks of the people of both countries, and that they may long retain the terms of amity and friendship. If no other blessing is derived from all that has happened, it will be no trifling one that the spell has been dissolved by which it has been supposed that Britain and France were necessarily enemies."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxviii. 464, 465.

105. Mr Canning's éloge of the Peace.

On this occasion Mr Canning said, in strains, considering what had occurred, of generous eloquence, "The real object of the war was the establishment of our own security and the tranquillity of the world; and with a view to that object it was necessary to resist the principles of that violent convulsive Republic which, having desolated France, sought to shake all the established thrones and governments of Europe. With that view we have resisted the military despotism which grew out of that convulsive system. We contended against the Jacobinism which gave birth to the war in all the shapes and forms which it had assumed to disturb us and the whole civilised world, and we have finally conquered. Yes! we have completely conquered, and in pursuing this glorious conquest, nothing has been more praiseworthy than the signal patience which this nation has manifested. The people

of this country in truth are entitled to more praise for what they have endured than what they have achieved; more for the manly steadiness with which they have stood at their post than the promptitude with which they have marched out to battle. It had been said that the spurious fire of French liberty, which burned only to consume, would have burned out without our interposition. But we had promoted and witnessed its final extinguishment, and we had the proud satisfaction of seeing that the nation in which it raged had at length come to this country for the pure flame of rational liberty. This is a legitimate and high source of national congratulation. I doubt, indeed, whether that undisputed command of the sea, which has been the conquest of the war, or the splendid achievements of our gallant army and its unrivalled leader, afford so much matter for just congratulation as to find that, after overcoming the wild enthusiastic delusive spirit of liberty which desolated France,—that after having been the saviours, we had become the model of Europe. Let us hope, for the interest of mankind, that that model will be generally adopted, that all nations will endeavour to introduce that vital spirit, that germ of strength, which has enabled so small a country to make such extraordinary exertions to save itself, and to deal out salvation to the world." [1] *

[1] Parl. Deb. xxviii. 451, 452.

* On this occasion Mr Whitbread said, in a manly and noble spirit, "I originally opposed the administration of the noble Lord opposite (Castlereagh), but seeing an alteration in the tone of that noble Lord from what I had remarked in his predecessors, and that too at a moment when more than ordinary success might have been supposed to make him less moderate, I came to repose confidence in his moderation, telling him at the same time that I did so, and that I hoped the time would come when I should be able to declare whether or not the confidence had been deserved. That time has now arrived; and I can tell the noble Lord that in every respect, except that article in the treaty regarding the slave trade, to which the noble Lord should never have put his hand, the noble Lord has completely and fully shown that he deserved that confidence which I have reposed in him. I can tell the noble Lord that if there is one part of his history which in my opinion redounds more to his honour than any other, it is that when he went to negotiate, he fairly tried the experiment of doing so with the then ruler of France. Though the papers have not been produced, I am fully convinced that the negotiations at Chatillon broke off only in consequence of the folly, madness, and what not of

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106. General errors as to the fall of Napoleon.

Historians and military writers have repeated, even to satiety, that Napoleon was overthrown because Europe arose as one man to shake off his oppression; and that, in a military point of view, his fall was owing to the obstinacy and infatuation with which he refused all reasonable terms of accommodation when proffered to him, on repeated occasions, by the Allied Powers. The more minute and accurate information, as to the real nature and chances of that conflict, gives strong reason to doubt whether either of their opinions is well-founded. So far from Europe having risen like one man to throw off the oppression of Napoleon, *it rose up like one man to support it;* the mighty conqueror led the whole forces of Western Europe in his crusade against Russia, he invaded its territory with half a million of men, more than double the number by which it was opposed; he was defeated not by the reaction of civilisation or the resolution of freedom, but the fervour of the desert and the constancy of religion. The serfs of Russia did that which neither the enthusiasm of the Italian, nor the independent spirit of the Teutonic race had been able to effect. Germany, it is true, rose with unanimous fervour in 1813 to *complete* the overthrow of Napoleon; but they did not do so till *after* the catastrophe of the Moscow campaign. Then they did not hoist the colours of independence so much as follow the standards of conquest. Had it not been for the resolution of Alexander and the fortitude of the Russians, the perseverance of the English could not have prevented the other states of Europe from willingly forging eternal chains for themselves.

Napoleon himself. The noble Lord's firmness, however, was not daunted; he persevered in his resolute course, and by his firmness contributed to keep the Allied Powers together till the business was brought to a glorious conclusion. I have often recommended ministers to make peace with the ruler of France, if it was practicable; and there was no evidence that it was impracticable till the noble Lord tried it; and when he did so, and it was found to be impracticable, no man rejoiced more than I did in the restoration of the Bourbons, coupled as it was with the saving of Paris from destruction."—MR WHITBREAD'S *Words, June* 29, 1814; *Parliamentary Debates*, xxviii. 455.

There is more reason in the opinion that Napoleon brought about his own ruin by his obstinate rejection of all reasonable terms of accommodation made to him, and his immuring half his army in distant fortresses on the frontier, when his empire was perishing for want of troops in its heart. There can be no doubt that both of these were great errors, and that the last, especially, was more than anything else conducive to his fall. It is remarkable that both mistakes proceeded from the same cause, and that was the excess of moral courage in himself, and an entire distrust in its existence in others. He declined the Allied propositions of peace at Prague and Chatillon, because he had confidence individually in his own star, but he had none in the steadiness of the French if it appeared to be waning; he retained his troops in the distant fortresses, because he knew that his empire was one of opinion, and that if it turned, and men saw any symptoms of decline in it, his prestige was at an end, and he would run the risk of being abandoned by his own subjects. It is for the same reason that the British were constrained to veil the retreat from Affghanistan under a second irruption into that distant region, which, if unsuccessful, would have involved their Indian Empire in ruin. But before we condemn the conduct of Napoleon as irrational, and such as at once occasioned his fall, we must reflect on what chances there were in his favour if he adopted it, and how near he repeatedly was to decisive success by pursuing it. Had he supported the advance of Vandamme towards Culm with the Young Guard, whom he halted at Pirna, after the attack on Dresden in 1813, he would have destroyed the Allied Grand Army; had he erected a few *forts detaches* around Paris in 1814, so as to enable it to hold out for a few days, till he returned from St Dizier, the whole Allied army would have found in their advance to that capital nothing but ruin.

107. Napoleon had good reasons for his latter conduct, though it ruined him.

And even with these great mistakes he would have been successful in the war, but for the moral courage

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108. Great effects of Lord Castlereagh and Sir Charles Stewart's courage.

and decisive acts of two men, who, strange to say, were brothers. Had not Lord Castlereagh provided the subsidies, and established the guaranteed paper currency, which he did in the beginning of the German war, the forces of Europe never would have been arrayed on the field of Leipsic; had not Sir Charles Stewart forced up Bernadotte and the Army of the North at the decisive moment, that great fight would at best have been a drawn battle, if not a defeat. Had not Lord Castlereagh persuaded the Allied Powers to conclude the treaty of Chaumont, they would have retired from France after the disasters of Blucher at Montmirail and Vauchamps; had he not by his single efforts, when all others despaired, torn the corps of Winzingerode and Bulow from Bernadotte, and placed them under Blucher, they would never have won the battle of Laon or advanced to Paris. Taught by these examples, the reflecting mind will hesitate to condemn a policy on the part of Napoleon, which so often, even in combating so great a coalition, brought him within a hair-breadth of decisive success, and, but for the strenuous efforts of two men, unquestionably would have done so. And without disputing the operation of general causes in all great political changes, he will probably arrive at the conclusion that much—very much—often depends on the agency of individual men; and that in recent, as well as ancient, times, the words of the Roman annalist are true:—"Mihi multa legenti, multa audienti, quæ populus Romanus, domi militiæque, mari atque terra, præclara facinora fecit, forte lubuit attendere, quæ res maxime tanta negotia sustinuisset. Sciebam sæpenumero parva manu cum magnis legionibus hostium contendisse: cognoveram, parvis copiis bella gesta cum opulentis regibus; ad hoc, sæpe fortunæ violentiam toleravisse; facundia Græcos, *gloria belli Gallos* ante Romanos fuisse. Ac mihi multa agitanti constabat, paucorum civium egregiam virtutem cuncta patravisse; eoque factum, uti divitias paupertas, multitudinem paucitas superaret."[1]

[1] Sallust, Bell. Cat. § 53.

Three men, and three only, stand forth pre-eminent in the great strife of Europe against France in this memorable year, and it is the highest glory of Great Britain that she can number two of them among her own children. These three are the Emperor Alexander, the Duke of Wellington, and Lord Castlereagh. Men will probably differ to the end of time, according as they are divided by nation, profession, or habits, as to the priority which is to be assigned to any of these great men in the grand deliverance; but all must agree that the co-operation of all the three was indispensable to its being effected. Without the intrepid courage and moral influence of Alexander, the military talents and unconquerable tenacity of Wellington, and the firm determination and persuasive sway of Castlereagh, the noble attempt would have failed, all the efforts of Europe would have been ineffectual, and the confirmed military power of France in modern, as of Rome in ancient, times, would have extinguished the rivalry of nations and the energy of individual mind in the slumber of universal dominion.

109. Co-operation of Alexander, Wellington, and Castlereagh in Napoleon's overthrow.

They were linked together in a way which, although not hitherto remarked, and altogether independent of each other, has almost the appearance of having been providential. Lord Castlereagh first discerned Wellington's talents, and, despite great Court influence, chose him for the command in Spain. He there maintained him in the face of the long-continued and strenuous efforts of the Whigs to decry his talents, and abandon as hopeless the contest in which he was engaged. He laid down at the very outset, and in the minutest particulars, the plans which Wellington carried out for the defence of Portugal in four successive campaigns. The success of this defensive campaign, and the retreat of the French from Torres Vedras, encouraged Alexander to adopt a similar system, and exhibit corresponding energy in resisting the invasion of Russia; and the Moscow retreat was the consequence. The total destruction of Napoleon's vast arma-

110. How they were linked together.

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ment, in that memorable year, induced Lord Castlereagh, now restored to power, to organise the Grand Alliance which combated in the succeeding year, and pour forth the treasures of England in a way which rendered effective the efforts of Germany for its deliverance. At this very time the victory of Vitoria and expulsion of the French from Spain by Wellington, compensated the defeats of Lutzen and Bautzen, and determined in favour of the Allies the vacillation of Austria. Lord Castlereagh again appeared with decisive effect in the Congress of Chatillon and campaign of 1814, and by his resolute support of the Emperor Alexander in the crisis of the fight, arrested the torrent of Napoleon's victories and brought the Allied standards in triumph to Paris. Beyond all doubt, it was by the combined action of the three men that the colossus of French power was overturned, and peace and independence restored to Europe. Had either of the three been awanting, all the efforts of the other two would have proved ineffectual in working out the desired deliverance.

111. Which of the three was the greatest?

If required to determine to which of the three in this great work the palm is to be awarded, it is more difficult to arrive at a just decision, and, with every wish to be impartial, the biographer can scarcely hope to be entirely exempt from national or individual prepossessions. Singly each has done things which may well render his name immortal. The Emperor of Russia's heroic conduct during the campaign of 1812, and his subsequent avenging of the flames of Moscow by the sparing of Paris, stands alone in the history of mankind, and has encircled his memory with a halo of purer glory than ever yet was allotted to uninspired man. Wellington's defence of Spain and Portugal is his own, and he may justly claim the highest renown for the resolution and perseverance with which he at length worked out their deliverance. His subsequent decisive victory at Waterloo will ever be remembered as the last stroke which prostrated the dis-

turber of the world's peace. To these great deeds may be paralleled, without claiming for him an equality, Castlereagh's conduct, as War Minister, after the treaty of Tilsit, and the manner in which, with the forces of Great Britain standing alone, and with all those of the Continent arrayed against him, he defeated all the maritime combinations of the enemy, and secured the independence of his country by destroying one-half of the naval force of his opponents. But if the achievements of the three in joint operations are considered, impartial justice must award the palm to the English statesman. But for him the forces of this Grand Alliance could never have been held together during the fearful crisis of 1813 and 1814; neither the chivalry of Alexander nor the generalship of Wellington could have effected the deliverance of Germany or conquest of France, if the resources and the influence of England had not been wielded by the hand, and their power directed by the moral courage, of Castlereagh. It was his vigour which brought forth the treasures of Great Britain at the proper season, to arm and equip the armies of Europe; it was his moral ascendancy which stilled the jealousies of the Governments and brought their forces together in dense and disciplined battalions to the theatre of conflict; it was his resolution which, at the decisive moment, arrested the progress of disaster, and induced victories which gave independence to the nation, and peace and happiness for forty years to the civilised world.

# CHAPTER XIV.

LORD CASTLEREAGH AND SIR CHARLES STEWART AT THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA IN 1814 AND 1815, TO THE SECOND TREATY OF PARIS, NOVEMBER 20, 1815.

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1. First thoughts of men after disaster is to guard against its recurrence.

WHENEVER a great calamity has been incurred, or a great danger escaped, either in public or private life, the first thought of those who have been preserved from the disaster is to take measures to prevent its recurrence. If a house has been burnt by the faulty construction of stoves or flues, that fault is sure not to be repeated in the restored edifice; if it has been broken into by thieves, care is immediately taken, by the construction of additional or more secure bolts and bars, to prevent a repetition of the invasion. It is the same in the affairs of nations. It may with certainty be predicted on the conclusion of a peace, after a long and perilous conflict, that the dangers chiefly guarded against will be those which had been most recently experienced. As the greatest or rather the whole evils and dangers which had been felt with such severity during the late war had arisen from the aggressive policy and military power of France, so the feeling uppermost in the minds of all those who were charged with the duty of arranging the terms of the general pacification on its conclusion, was to guard by every possible means against its recurrence. It was on this principle that the arrangements agreed to by the secret treaty, concluded at Paris on 30th May preceding, had been framed. The addition of the Flemish provinces to the kingdom of

Holland, of the Rhenish to that of Prussia, of the city and harbour of Genoa to the kingdom of Piedmont, and the formation of a great defensive confederacy, composed of the whole states of Germany, were all so many means towards the attainment of this end. They were designed to surround France with a girdle of affiliated *monarchies*, which should render it impossible for its armies, under revolutionary direction, to cross their own frontier without finding themselves in the territories of a respectable state, supported by others actuated by similar interests, and threatened by the same ambition.

2. The restoration of the Bourbons was the great security.

But although the establishment of these strong outposts against French ambition added considerably to the security of Europe, and the reduction of France to its ancient limits took much from its means of aggression, yet experience had proved that these precautionary measures could not alone be relied on to prevent a repetition of the calamities from which so narrow an escape had been made. It could never be forgotten that France, animated by revolutionary passions, *starting from her old frontiers, had carried her arms to Cadiz and the Kremlin.* The same thing, if the same passions revived, might be expected to recur. The danger of success in a similar crusade against the independence of nations would be even greater on the second occasion than the first; for not only was France stronger and more warlike at the conclusion of so many conquests than it had been at their commencement, but it was evident that desires and aspirations had been awakened by her successes in other countries, which rendered it more than probable that in some of them, at least, she would find ready and zealous supporters. It was evident to all, that Europe was now divided everywhere into two great parties—those of progress and conservatism — which presented more attractive war-cries than the old banners of nations. When France hoisted the standard of revolution, and carried her eagles abroad with the words, "War to the

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palace, and peace to the cottage," she soon found herself at the head of a powerful confederacy, composed of the Batavian, Cisalpine, Roman, Ligurian, and Parthenopeian republics. It was their accumulated strength which overcame the might of Germany, and hurled the whole military force of Western Europe on the devoted realm of Russia. As long as France was ruled by a revolutionary government she would always be the head of a similar coalition, and when matters came to a crisis its members would all unite their forces to hers. As the revolutionary passions in all the adjoining states were far stronger at the close of the war than they had been at its outset, a second crusade against the independence of other nations might with certainty be looked for at no distant period if a revolutionary government was at the head of that powerful military state. It was for this reason that the Allied Powers resolved to make no peace with "Napoleon or any of his family," and that Lord Castlereagh, albeit to the last degree averse to any interference with the internal affairs of France, was sincerely rejoiced when the choice of the Senate and Legislative Body fell on the Bourbon family.

3. Reasons of Lord Castlereagh's favouring that object.

"The ancient race and the ancient territory," was Lord Castlereagh's *beau ideal* for the pacification and settlement of Europe, and he often made use of these expressions when the matter was under discussion at the close of the war. His reason was not any preference in the abstract for the Bourbon family over that of Napoleon, still less any predilection for arbitrary government, or aversion to the growth of real freedom. No man was less wedded to particular families, or less under their influence; none was ever more attached to general liberty. It was from a clear perception of the effect of a successful insurrection, and the establishment of a revolutionary dynasty on the throne of such a state as France, that he desired the restoration of the ancient amily. He saw that the French Revolution had per-

manently severed European society into two great parties, whose principles were irreconcilable, forms of government opposite, and hostility eternal. There could be no real peace between these two great divisions of mankind, any more than between the Romans and Carthaginians in ancient, the Christians and Saracens in modern times. Any temporary suspension of hostilities between such Powers could be only an armed truce. The establishment of a revolutionary government on the throne of such a powerful military state as France was more calculated than any other circumstance to increase the strength of the revolutionary league, and encourage similar convulsions in other states, because it was a standing example of the triumph of such a *bouleversement*, and formed a lasting *point d'appui*, round which all lesser states, having effected a similar subversion of the ancient authorities, would congregate. Thus, as long as France was under a revolutionary government she would never cease openly or covertly to encourage similar changes in other states, because she hoped to find in them political and physical support, and those governments would never cease to look to her as their head, and the Power which on a crisis would support them against all attacks from the legitimate sovereigns. And as England had long been the head of the anti-revolutionary party in Europe, and the only Power which had escaped subjugation from France, it might with confidence be expected that the whole hostility of the revolutionary league would, if successful on the Continent, be directed in the end against her power and independence.

4. Great danger he apprehended from Russia.

Such a turn of affairs, which presented itself to Lord Castlereagh's mind as not only possible but probable, if a revolutionary dynasty were established on the French throne, would inevitably lead to a renewal, on a great scale, of the Continental war, and the growth of a fresh danger in Eastern Europe not less formidable to general freedom and the independence of nations than the tri-

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umph of the revolutionary principle in the west. Distracted as the military strength of Great Britain was, by her empire in India and the defence of her colonial possessions in every quarter of the globe, it was impossible that her armies could appear on the Continent in sufficient strength to combat alone such a league with France at its head; and experience had proved that neither Austria nor Prussia, nor even the two united, could stand against it. Thus the reliance of the conservative league would, in the last extremity, infallibly come to be on Russia; and if she came forth and was a second time victorious in the fight, what security would remain for the independence of the other European Powers, or the general liberty of mankind? "*Serpens nisi serpentem comederit non sit draco.*" Beyond all doubt, in such an event the liberties of Europe, in every age the ark of freedom, would be trampled under foot by the Asiatic cavalry. This peril presented itself in the strongest manner to the mind of Lord Castlereagh, and it will immediately appear what courageous efforts he made to avert it. It was hard to say whether Europe had most to fear from the Red Republicans of Paris, or the swarthy cavaliers of the desert. Napoleon was of the same opinion, and equally with him foresaw the dire alternative. "In half a century," said he, "Europe will be Cossack or Republican."

5. Lord Castlereagh's principle was a German confederacy and the restoration of Poland, independent of Russia.

The restoration of the ancient race in France, without doubt, afforded a guarantee, in a certain degree, for the peace of the world, and the postponing of such a dire collision; but it could not be relied on as a permanent security against it. The French people, and, above all, the Parisians, have, especially in recent times, been found to be so fickle, that it can never be predicated for any length of time, under what form of government, or race of sovereigns, they will continue. Add to this, that Russia was as steady as the Parisians were changeable; but its steadiness was all directed, like that of England in India,

to one object, territorial aggrandisement, and the increase of political influence. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, for the future peace and independence of Europe, that some power should be formed which might be capable of resisting either of these antagonists, or even both together, if, from motives of ambition, they should enter into an alliance. Such a power was to be found in Germany, and Germany alone. Locally situated between them, the one could not reach the other but by subjugating and passing over the forces of her confederacy. Strong, warlike, and patriotic, her 40,000,000 of inhabitants, if united, were fully a match for either France or Russia; aided by England, she would be so against both. But the real strength of Germany lay in Austria and Prussia; experience in every age had proved that the confederacy, slow to act, and often distracted by mutual jealousies or discordant interests, could not be regarded, but for these Powers, as an efficient barrier either against France or Russia. It was therefore indispensable, in Lord Castlereagh's estimation, to the independence and liberties of Europe, that Austria and Prussia should both be powerful; and this could be done only by restoring to the former of these her whole possessions in Northern Italy, and augmenting the latter by the whole, or the greater part, of Saxony. In so doing, it was no doubt necessary to make a painful sacrifice; the annexation of Saxony to Prussia, that of Genoa to Piedmont, would be stigmatised as acts of spoliation equal to the worst of Napoleon's. But independence was better than nationality; the King of Prussia would become the sovereign of Prussia and Saxony, as the King of England is of England and Scotland; the feelings of country would not be outraged, and an indemnity for the dispossessed royal family might be found in some of the ceded territories on the banks of the Rhine. He still further desired to put a bridle in the mouth of Russia, by restoring, if possible, Poland to the state of an independent kingdom, under an independent sovereign.

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6. His views in regard to Norway and Sweden.

The same reason of overpowering necessity to provide a barrier against Russia, led Lord Castlereagh to acquiesce, as already seen, in the annexation of Norway to Sweden, in terms of the treaty with Russia in 1812. Denmark being entirely at the mercy of Russia, by reason of her geographical position, if Norway formed part of her dominions, Sweden would be in the same predicament, and the Baltic would become as completely a Russian lake, as by the treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi the Euxine afterwards became. But if the whole Scandinavian peninsula were united under one head, the keys of the Sound would be divided. Sweden was the ancient and hereditary enemy of Russia, and ally of England; and these dispositions might be expected to acquire additional strength, if Great Britain were the only Power on whom she could securely rely for support against her gigantic neighbour. Nor would she, to all appearance, rely in vain; for the Swedish fleet, aided by the British, would be more than adequate to the encounter of the Russian; and the march round the Gulf of Bothnia is so long and difficult, as to be alone practicable in the height of summer, and even then only to a comparatively small body of troops. The experience of the late war had sufficiently proved that, with the aid of the fleet and an inconsiderable body of British troops, Sweden, when delivered from Finland, could maintain its independence against all the efforts of Russia.

7. And Italy.

But the same paramount necessity of securing Europe against the preponderance of France and Russia, led Lord Castlereagh to a conclusion directly the reverse in regard to Italy. He was profoundly impressed with the opinion, which he shared with Metternich and all the most experienced statesmen of the age, that that beautiful peninsula, divided as it had been for ages into separate principalities, and unaccustomed to warlike exertions, was incapable either of bearing the excitement of internal freedom, or maintaining, from its own resources, its external independence, but perfectly capable of being

swept away by the passions of liberty, and rushing headlong, regardless of the consequences, into the career of revolution. A more perilous neighbour than a people of such mingled passions and weakness for France, in which the innovating desires were only damped, not extinguished, could not be conceived; and Lord Castlereagh, accordingly, equally with Prince Metternich, regarded Italy as the country in which the vast eruption of the revolutionary volcano was likely next to break out, which would probably extend to and involve the whole Continent in a general war, and terminate in re-establishing that oppressive military despotism of France, from which Europe had recently suffered so severely and so narrowly escaped. A revolutionary dynasty, once re-established at Paris, every subsequent *successful revolution in Europe would be a direct addition to the power of France*, because it would add another to the league of revolutionary, against monarchical states. Whatever her feelings and sympathies might be in the outset, her material interests, and the instinct of self-preservation, would necessarily compel England to join the latter league in the end, though possibly when it might be too late. The only way to guard against these manifold and formidable dangers, and prevent Italy from becoming the right arm of France in the great contest which was to avenge the Peninsular victories and capture of Paris, was to continue the entire peninsula under its old government, and prevent that temporary concentration of its strength, ostensibly in defence of its independence, which would eventually terminate in its entire subjugation, and being exclusively devoted to the purposes of France.

Such were Lord Castlereagh's views for the settlement and future independence of Europe, and which were in great part embraced by the Congress of Vienna. Stigmatised at the time, and for a course of years afterwards, as an unworthy concession to the desires of the Continental sovereigns, and a remnant of antiquated ideas behind the

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lights of the age, they were in reality based on the love of independence, and a clear perception of the quarter in which it was most likely to be menaced. Every day is now illustrating their wisdom and confirming their justice. They were indeed inconsistent with the lights of the age, but not because they were behind, but because they were before them.

8. Assembling of the Congress of Vienna.

By the thirty-second article of the treaty of Paris of 30th May, the Congress at Vienna was to meet in two months from that date. But it was soon found that this time was too early. It was so for all the Powers engaged in the treaty. The Emperor of Austria, who had not come to London, made a triumphant entry into Vienna, attended with extraordinary magnificence. A splendid transparency was exhibited on this occasion in the evening, in which Alexander and Francis were represented *en première ligne;* Frederick William and George *en second.* After the fêtes in London were ended, the King of Prussia returned to Berlin, and the Emperor of Russia repaired, not to St Petersburg, *but to Warsaw,* where he immediately exerted all the inexpressible charms of his manner in conciliating the Poles. His courtiers speedily spread abroad his views regarding this country; it was known that he contemplated the *entire restoration* of Poland under a constitutional government, in conformity with the wants of the age. This intelligence diffused universal enchantment; and it was little allayed by the knowledge that the Emperor himself was to be at the head of the government, because they thought with reason, that the great thing, in the first instance, was to reconstruct the monarchy; its independence would come after. At St Petersburg they held still higher language; and the letters of the minister at Berlin announced that the Prussians declared that unless they got the whole of Saxony, they would be worse off than they were before the war;[1] while the Russians boasted that with 600,000

[1] Thiers, xviii. 421; Cap. i. 70-73.

men ready to take the field, there was no occasion for much negotiation about Poland.*

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At length, on 25th September, the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia made their public entry into Vienna, and were met at the gate of the city by the Emperor Francis. The three sovereigns embraced with every mark of the most cordial affection, amidst the enthusiastic applause of a vast concourse of spectators, surrounded by whom they were conducted by their imperial host to their magnificent quarters in the palace. Next day the Kings of Bavaria, Wirtemberg, and Denmark arrived, with the Prince of Orange, and a crowd of Italian and German potentates, who were likely to be interested in the arrangements which were anticipated. The King of Saxony alone was absent, who had been a prisoner in Berlin on his parole ever since the battle of Leipsic, and the Empress Marie Louise, who was at Schönbrunn busily occupied, under the direction of her principal officer, Count Neiperg, a man of discretion and ability, in defending her own rights and those of her son, the King of Rome, in the Duchy of Parma, against the pretensions and claims founded on old hereditary rights of the two branches of the house of Bourbon. They were all attended by their respective ministers; Nesselrode on the part of Russia, and Hardenberg on that of Prussia. The Prince Regent

Sept. 9. It is assembled. Sept. 25.

* "There is a general uneasiness here, and the language of the Russians is not of a nature to lessen it; they are the first to condole with the Saxons, to cry out against the atrocity of their contemplated annexation to Prussia, and to throw the odium of it on this country [Britain]; while, on the other hand, one of their leading generals, speaking of the probable difficulties which might occur at the approaching congress, replied, '*Oh! pour cela, avec* 600,000 *hommes, on ne négocie beaucoup.*' Prince Hardenberg, aware of these circumstances, despairing of Russia being induced to forego any of her pretensions on the side of Poland, and anxious to allay the jealousy which is very generally felt among the Prussians at seeing their neighbours already in possession of their respective allotments, is very strenuous in his endeavours to accelerate the occupation of Saxony—a measure believed to be so repugnant to the personal feelings of the King his master, that, at a council held last week, in which the Chancellor, supported by Prince Blucher and Count Tauenzein, strongly urged its necessity, his Majesty could not be induced to consent to its immediate execution, and broke up the assembly with evident marks of displeasure."—MR JACKSON *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Berlin, August* 19, 1814; *Cast. Corresp.* x. 96.

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of England and King of France were not present; but they were fully represented by their respective ministers for foreign affairs, Lord Castlereagh on behalf of the former, and Prince Talleyrand on that of the latter. Nor were princesses and female diplomatists awanting, often the most important because the least suspected, and the most persuasive negotiators on such occasions. Among them was particularly remarked the Grand-duchess Catherine, sister of the Emperor Alexander, and widow of the Duke of Oldenburg, a princess of remarkable energy and talent, known to exercise a considerable influence over her brother and many others of the leading persons in the Congress.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 422; Cap. i. 70, 78; Hard. xii. 452, 453.

10. Points on which they were all agreed and on which they differed.

On some of the leading points of the arrangements all parties were agreed, and their consent had been ratified by the treaty of Paris on the 30th May preceding. It was settled that Holland, augmented by Belgium, was to be allotted to the Prince of Orange, with the title of King of the Netherlands; that Austria was to receive Lombardy and Venetia as far as the Po and the Ticino; that Prussia should be reinstated in all her dominions, as they stood before the French war in 1805; and that the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, so much the object of jealousy and desire to Russia, should be dissolved, and Norway annexed to Sweden, as well as Genoa to Piedmont. But the boundaries of Belgium, especially towards Germany, were not fixed, the fate of Saxony was undecided, and that of Poland was involved in impenetrable darkness, which the Western Powers recoiled from attempting to penetrate. From the very first a very great degree of concord was observed among the representatives of the four great Powers which had taken the lead in the war of liberation, and "*les quatre*," as they were called, were the object of undisguised jealousy to the other states, and especially France and the lesser states of Germany. But within the awful precincts of "les quatre" there was a still closer alliance, founded not merely on identity of po-

litical interest, but on the yet stronger bond of personal friendship and common danger. Alexander and Frederick William had stood by each other in many a well-debated field; they had "summered it and wintered it together." Together they had stood before the ramparts of Dresden; together they had faced the thunders of Leipsic; together they had shared in the triumphs of Paris. From the very depths of national humiliation and degradation Alexander's powerful arm had raised Prussia to the highest pitch of prosperity and glory. For nearly two years they had lived almost in the same tent, and rode all day side by side. They were nearly of the same age, alike chivalrous in feeling and refined in manner, and during all that time they had never had a wish or a feeling but in common. It was not in human nature that these circumstances should not have produced an extraordinary degree of intimacy and friendship, like that of Pylades and Orestes in ancient times, which partook more of the warmth of love than the ordinary attractions of worldly interest.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 424, 425.

II. The Emperor of Russia on Poland.

In addition to this, the material interests of these two sovereigns were in a great measure identical, and led them to pursue the same line of policy. Alexander had to gain Poland; Frederick William, Saxony. The Czar had magnificent and generous views for the restoration of the fallen Sarmatian nation. In common with all the world, he felt the extreme injustice which had been perpetrated upon it by the partition; but he felt also that he had the means of restitution in his hands, and he regarded himself as the instrument in the hand of Providence for the accomplishment of that great act of national justice. His plan was to restore the whole kingdom of Poland as it stood in 1772, including Lithuania, Gallicia, the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, and the Duchy of Posen. Sixteen millions of men would thus regain their lost nationality, and the ancient and illustrious kingdom of Poland, the bulwark of Christendom, would rise from its grave. It is true this would imply a great sacrifice of territory and revenue on

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the side both of Austria and Prussia; but he proposed fully to indemnify both of these Powers—Prussia by the whole of Saxony, besides the Rhenish provinces; and Austria, on the side of Italy. Russia would require no indemnity for the cession of the Grand-duchy of Lithuania, containing nine millions of inhabitants, for he proposed that he himself was to be the King of Poland, which was to descend to the same series of heirs as the crown of Russia. The Emperor was so set on the realisation of this project, that all the efforts of the French and English diplomatists were unable to divert him from it; and the Duke of Wellington, proceeding on the information furnished by Talleyrand as to what was going on at Vienna, wrote to Lord Castlereagh that matters were hopeless from the determination of the Czar, and that war was inevitable.* Lord Castlereagh, from the first, made the most strenuous efforts to resist the Emperor's views on this point, and to unite the other Powers in one system against it, but for long he did not meet the support he might have expected, not even from M. de Talleyrand, on the part of France.[1] †

[1] Thiers, xviii. 425, 426.

* "Lord Castlereagh adressa à l'Empereur Alexandre plusieurs mémoires dans lesquels *il s'opposait itérativement et avec force* au nom de sa Cour à l'erection d'un royaume de Pologne qui fût uni et qui fit parti de la Couronne Imperiale de Russie; le désir de sa Cour étant de voir une *puissance indépendante*, plus ou moins considérable en étendue établie en Pologne sous une dynastie distincte, et comme un état intermédiaire entre les trois grandes monarchies." —CAPEFIGUE, *Les Cent Jours*, i. 87.

† "I have this instant had an interview with M. de Blacas. I found him much displeased at the *continued obstinacy of the Emperor of Russia respecting Poland*, on which he says that he understands his Imperial Majesty declared, before he quitted Vienna to go into Hungary, that he considered all matters settled; that *he was to be king of Poland, and the King of Prussia king of Saxony;* and that he had given M. de Talleyrand to understand that he would not depart from his plan on either of those countries. M. de Blacas said that the result would be that the King, and most probably the Prince Regent [of England], would withdraw their ministers from the Congress, declaring that they could not acknowledge these arrangements, and that Europe would remain in a feverish state, which sooner or later must end in war.

"I again urged him in the strongest manner to have instructions sent to M. de Talleyrand to lay aside all considerations upon small points, *and to unite cordially with you* in a great effort to produce the union of all the Powers in Europe against the projected aggrandisement of Russia. M. de Blacas then said that he considered that there were three great objects for arrangement—Poland, Naples, and Saxony—upon which the King felt an almost equal interest,

It may readily be believed that Prussia deemed an ample compensation due to her for the proposed relinquishment of her Polish territories, the more especially that she would, by the cession of Thorn, Modlin, and the fortresses on the Vistula to Russia, be entirely denuded of her eastern frontier. But the Emperor Alexander entirely reconciled the Cabinet of Berlin to this step, by the proposal that the whole of Saxony should be annexed to Prussia, the crown of which should be permanently placed on the brows of the house of Brandenburg. It was urged in support of this arrangement by Prince Hardenberg, "that the loss of Southern Poland to the advantage of Russia, imperatively called for an indemnity to Prussia: Saxony is the only country which presents such a compensation. To recreate it, and render it powerful, is acknowledged on all hands to be essential to the establishment of a balance of power in Europe, and the great increase of power pro-

12. Views of Prussia.

and that he did not think your Lordship was inclined to act so directly to affect the views which the Government of both countries professed to have, as he had expected, and that he wished that you should receive further instructions on the subject from home. I told him that he was quite mistaken; that I had not the papers to show him, but could assure him that *language could not be stronger than that which you had used, both verbally and in writing,* to the Emperor of Russia, to dissuade him from his Polish scheme, which was the foundation of all the mischief, and that you were directing all your efforts to connect the ministers of the other Powers of Europe in the same views and measures with you on this point; that you considered other points as comparatively unimportant; and that, moreover, the ultimate decision of them depended more or less on the decision as to the Polish question, which went to whether there should or not be in Europe any system whatever of equilibrium.

"I reminded him that I had already apprised him that M. de Talleyrand was running after these small objects, instead of looking to that principal one: and he admitted that he was not himself satisfied with his conduct. He then proposed that Great Britain, France, Spain, and Holland should agree by treaty not to recognise the Polish arrangement; and he pressed the point strongly and repeatedly, as being the best mode of drawing with us Austria and Prussia. I told him that all combinations of this description created jealousy, and that the first and immediate effect of such an arrangement would be to separate us from our old allies. He gave up this idea, and he went away at last, as he said, convinced that the best method to be adopted was all to unite for the object of opposing the Emperor's views on Poland, laying all minor points aside, and promising to endeavour to remove from the King's mind the impression that you were not decided in your measures on this point."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *November* 5, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 183, 184.

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posed to be given to Russia renders it more than ever necessary."[1] These ideas met with a cordial response in Prussia; but it was far otherwise in Saxony, where the national feelings and attachment to their sovereign were universal among the inhabitants; and the people were unanimously opposed to the project of handing them over to their hereditary enemies. A host of pamphlets speedily made their appearance at Dresden, in which the annexation project was vehemently condemned; and to such a pitch did the ferment arise that the governors of Torgau and Wittenberg shut their gates and prepared for resistance to the inhabitants. Meanwhile Hardenberg made a formal demand on England and Austria for the immediate cession of the whole of Saxony; to which Lord Castlereagh, on the part of Great Britain, gave his reluctant adhesion. That of Metternich was more guarded, and pointed to the retention of a part of the Saxon dominions by the ancient family. Talleyrand, on the part of France, openly and unreservedly opposed the annexation, as was done by several of the lesser princes in Germany.*

[1] Hardenberg's Minute, Oct. 9, 1814, Hard. xii. 458.

Oct. 10.

* Lord Castlereagh replied to Hardenberg on the 11th October:—"Si l'annexation de la Saxe à la Prusse s'accordait avec le salut de l'Europe, *il garantissait le consentement de l'Angleterre*, quoique la ruine d'une aussi ancienne maison le remplit de douleur; mais que si les princes Allemands, après avoir failli, avaient réparé leurs fautes par des services subséquens, il n'en était pas de même du Roi de Saxe; que sa déclaration devait, cependant, être regardée comme nulle dans le cas où la Saxe serait sacrifiée aux prétensions de la Russie et non aux intérêts de l'Europe."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* PRINCE HARDENBERG, *October* 11, 1814; HARDENBERG, xii. 459, 460; and *Castlereagh MS.*

Prince Metternich did not reply till the 22d October; and then he said:—"En faisant abstraction des liens de famille existant entre les maisons d'Autriche et de la Saxe, son souverain ne pouvait approuver l'annexion des Etats Saxons *en entier* à la couronne Prussienne—source éternelle de méfiance entre les deux Puissances ainsi rapprochée; que si, néanmoins, la force des circonstances l'exigeait, il serait nécessaire qu'on prit des arrangemens sur la fixation des frontières, la fortification des places, et les relations commerciales, ainsi que sur la ligne de défense de l'Allemagne méridionale; que sa Majesté ferait connaître ses vues relativement à la forteresse de Mayence, mais que tout considéré le Roi reconnaitrait qu'il convenait de laisser à l'ancienne maison une partie de son royaume."—PRINCE METTERNICH *à* PRINCE HARDENBERG, *Octobre* 22, 1814; HARDENBERG'S *Mémoires*, xii. 460.

Prince Talleyrand answered on the part of France on the 2d November:—"Le Roi de Saxe n'avait été ni accusé ni interrogé; il n'existe aucun tribunal compétent pour le juger; la Saxe demande son retour, l'Allemagne réclame

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Austria, at this juncture, was, it may well be believed, not less disquieted than Great Britain at the projected vast addition to the power of its gigantic neighbour; but its exposed situation, and the want of any defensible frontiers between them, prevented her from giving expression to its views with the same resolution. All that Metternich ventured to do was to strive to prevent the incorporation of Gallicia with the restored kingdom of Poland; and on that condition he consented to the Polish frontier being extended to Kalisch, which brought it greatly nearer both to Vienna and Berlin, and would have secured to the Czar a preponderating influence in the Germanic confederacy. He held out strongly for the retention of Cracow and Zamosc, which Alexander was desirous to absorb; as he also was Thorn, the bulwark of Prussian Poland. The Czar supported these demands by the significant hint that he had 400,000 men in Poland, that the whole country, with its strongholds, was already in his possession, and that he was governing it as his own. Metternich felt the force of these considerations; and, as he knew that the chief weight of Russia, in the event of a rupture, would fall on Austria, he deemed it advisable to moderate his

13. Views of Austria.

l'intégrité des droits de tous compromis par le sacrifice de la Saxe; que le feu couvait sous la cendre, et que, s'il éclatait, la France ne pourrait en demeurer spectatrice oisive; que si l'annexion demandée s'effectuait, on verrait renaître la rivalité de la Prusse et de l'Autriche, ce qui compromettrait la tranquillité de l'Europe."—PRINCE TALLEYRAND à PRINCE HARDENBERG, *Novembre* 2, 1814; HARDENBERG, xii. 460.

The King of Saxony, then a prisoner in Friedrichsfeld, protested on the 4th November "contre occupation de la Saxe, déclarant que la position de son pays l'avait seule empêchait de se prononcer contre la France; et que le but de la guerre ayant été le maintien des trônes légitimes, il avait du s'attendre à la restitution de l'héritage de ses ancêtres; en conséquence il protestait contre la prise de possession de ses états, qu'en aucun temps il ne consentirait à céder ou à échanger." In support of this protest, the Duke of Saxe Cobourg wrote to Lord Castlereagh on the 14th November:—"Par la destruction du royaume de Saxe, la Prusse et l'Autriche se trouveraient dans une *situation hostile;* que la Russie et la Prusse étant intimement liées, la première de ces Puissances appuierait les vues du seconde en Allemagne tandis que la seconde appuierait les vues d'agrandissement de la Russie au côté de la Turquie; et qu'on verrait *l'Allemagne détruite, l'empire Ottoman* renversé, et la paix de l'Europe ébranlée."—LE PRINCE DE SAXE COBOURG à LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Novembre* 14, 1814; HARDENBERG, xii. 461.

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demands, and insist only for the cession of Cracow and Zamosc. He in secret indulged the hope that restored Poland would prove, instead of an accession of strength, a source of weakness to Russia—an opinion justified by the experience of England in regard to Ireland, and of which his own country had repeatedly felt the weight in the government of Hungary.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 456, 457.

14. And of France.

France, which was guided by the experience and supported by the ability of Prince Talleyrand, was, in the first instance, nervous on the preliminary point, whether its representatives would be admitted to a place in the Congress, which it was thought would be composed exclusively of the Allied Powers. Lord Castlereagh strongly supported the admission of France, as did Metternich, and they gained their point. This with reason was considered as a great triumph by the French diplomatist, as it materially weakened, if not entirely broke the treaty of alliance concluded under Lord Castlereagh's auspices at Chaumont in the beginning of the year between the four great Powers.* Having gained this point, Talleyrand, under the strongest instructions from his Court, set himself to work out another, of equal importance to France, and still greater to the Bourbon dynasty, and himself as its representative. This was to procure the dethronement of Murat in Naples, and the restitution of its crown to the Bourbon family, together with the removal

* "M. de Talleyrand fit observer: 'Que le consentement promis par la France à ces arrangemens ne devait s'entendre que de faits positifs, et non d'évènemens éventuels; et que tout ce qui n'était pas convenu et arrêté entre *tous* les Alliés n'était pas censé d'exister. Que la dénomination d'Alliés était tombé par le seul fait de la paix, et devenait même injurieuse au Roi; qu'il n'existait pas, à ses yeux, qu'un congrès général auquel toutes les Puissances étaient appelées à concourir; et que sa propre responsibilité lui interdisait de reconnaître la dénomination d'Alliés qui voulaient continuer à prendre les Cours de Vienne, de Londres, de St Petersburg, et de Berlin.' A ces représentations il fut repondu: 'Que l'alliance de Chaumont du 1 Mars 1814, avait pour but (article 5), même après la conclusion de la paix avec la France, *d'en assurer le maintien;* et qu'ainsi cette alliance n'était pas incompatible avec la dignité de son souverain, qu'elle tendait bien plutôt a'affirmer; qu'une alliance n'était point hostile de sa nature à moins qu'elle ne fut offensive et explicitement dirigé contre une Puissance.'"—CAPEFIGUE, i. 75.

of Napoleon from the island of Elba to the Azores. The first he represented as the necessary complement of the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty in France;* the last as a measure indispensable to the peace of Europe. Repeated representations were received at this time, and through the whole autumn and winter, of the intrigues of Napoleon and Murat in Italy, and the preparations making, both in Paris and elsewhere, for a general revolution and restoration of the dethroned monarch, on the throne from which he had been cast down. To such a length did this go, that it was strongly impressed upon the British Government that the Duke of Wellington was in danger at Paris; and the Cabinet, fearful for so valuable a life, frequently urged him to accept some other situation, and take the command in North America, where the contest was still undecided. But the Duke, with the calm resolution which was descriptive of his character, made light of it, and, imbued with the idea that his place was at Paris, and that his removal from thence would betray a distrust in the stability of the restoration, which might seriously prejudice the interests of the country and of Europe, entreated them to let him remain where he was, which was accordingly done. Meanwhile Talleyrand sent memorial after memorial to the Congress, the burden of which was that "there could be no security for any person, nor any general stipulation, so long as Buonaparte was within twenty leagues of the coasts of Italy and France."[1]† [1] Cap. i. 85.

* "Les dynasties légitimes ont été retablies; mais l'une d'elles est menacée; la Révolution, donc, n'est pas encore finie. Que faut il pour qu'elle finisse? Que le principe de la légitimité triomphe sans restriction; que le Roi et le royaume de Saxe soient conservés; et que *le royaume de Naples soit rendu au légitime souverain.* Sans cela, la Révolution subsisterait; la lutte ne serait pas terminée. Le traité de Paris et les travaux du Congrès n'auraient fait que la suspendre; il y aurait une trève mais pas de paix veritable."—Le PRINCE TALLEYRAND *à* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Octobre* 26, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence, MS.*; CAPEFIGUE, i. 82.

† "My safety depends upon the King's; and, although I hear every day of the discontents, and of their probable results, and I have reason to believe, from a communication I have had with the Duc d'Orleans, that Blacas is inclined to

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15. Views of Lord Castlereagh and the British Cabinet at this juncture.

The peculiar views of England at this period, so far as the Cabinet was concerned and Lord Castlereagh desired, were mainly directed to establishing an equilibrium in Europe, and securing its inhabitants from a repetition of the disasters they had suffered from foreign military domination, either from the side of France or Russia. To attain this object, the only security which could be relied on, was to be found in rendering Germany united, great, and powerful, capable of repelling assault, and

give more credit to both than he has ever acknowledged to me, and I do not see what means the King has of resisting the brisk attack of a few hundred officers, determined to risk everything; yet I can scarcely bring my mind to give credit to so infamous a design. It is impossible, however, to conceive the distress in which individuals of all descriptions are. The only remedy is the revival of Buonaparte's system of war and plunder; and it is evident that that remedy cannot be adopted during the reign of the Bourbons. I am quite certain that the population of the country, and even of Paris, is favourable to the Bourbons: the discontented and dangerous classes are the reduced officers, and *employés civiles*, particularly those returned from being prisoners of war. . . .

"If you remove me from hence, you must employ me elsewhere. You cannot, in my opinion, at this moment decide upon sending me to America. I told Lord Bathurst I had no objection to going, though I don't promise myself much success there. I believe there are troops enough there for the defence of Canada for ever, and even for the accomplishment of any reasonable offensive plan. . . . What appears to me to be wanting in America is not a general, or general officers and troops, but a *naval superiority on the lakes:* till that superiority is acquired, it is impossible, according to my notion, to maintain an army in such a situation as to keep the enemy out of the whole frontier, much less to make any conquest from the enemy. . . . The whole history of the war proves its truth. . . . The question is, whether we can obtain this naval superiority on the lakes. If we cannot, I shall do you but little good in America; and I shall go there *only to prove the truth of Prevost's defence, and to sign a peace which might as well be signed now.*"—DUKE OF WELLINGTON *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *Paris, November* 9, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 186-188.

"Napoleon Buonaparte n'a pas abdiqué de bonne foi: il a abdiqué avec l'idée de remonter un jour sur le trône d'Italie, et le Roi de Naples, Murat, doit l'aider à y rémonter. 'Quand vous verrez mes affaires désespérées,' disoit Napoléon à Murat, 'arrangez-vous comme vous pourrez: seulement tâchez de conserver le Royaume que vous tenez de moi, car quelque jour vous pourrez m'aider à chasser les Autrichiens et me résaisir de la couronne d'Italie.' . . .

"Il y a un plan concerté entre Buonaporte et Murat, j'en ai la certitude. Le Roi de Naples secondera les Alliés en Italie jusqu'à tant que le gros de leur armée ne soit retirée; mais en conservant pour lui de bonnes positions militaires. Il fera alliance avec la puissance qui dominera en Italie, et, ou par ruse, ou par force, il tâchera dans la suite de l'expulser de ce pays, et l'Empereur s'engage de l'aider. Il tâchera surtout de s'emparer des ports de l'Italie pour pouvoir donner la loi aux Anglois, et les faire accéder au nouvel ordre de

making itself respected either on the east or west. But here a great and seemingly insurmountable difficulty presented itself. Austria and Prussia being the two great military monarchies of the confederation, its warlike strength depended mainly on their union and co-operation; but here Russia had interfered with fatal and hitherto decisive effect. By reclaiming, in a voice which could not be withstood, Prussian Poland from the Cabinet of Berlin, and offering them Saxony in exchange, the Czar had inserted the wedge into the heart of the German Confederacy, established a paramount influence over its northern power, and rendered Austria jealous of the preponderance proposed to be given to its rising rival by this annexation. Thus, at the very moment when the danger was greatest, and united action most required, it had become most difficult to attain it. To add to the difficulties which Lord Castlereagh had in carrying out his views for the independence of Europe, the Power which had the most interest in supporting them could not at the moment be induced to take any active part in the matter. France, under the direction of M. Talleyrand, was more set on dethroning Murat in Italy, and curtailing Prussia in Germany, than on preventing the threatened great addition to the colossus of the North. Thus Lord Castlereagh was virtually left alone to maintain the contest for Poland, and, with it, for European independence; and how was Great Britain, with the

choses." — LE CHEVALIER T——— *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Novembre* 29, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 211.

"I have already told you that I have no objection to going to America, and I will go whenever I may be ordered. But does it not occur to your Lordship that, by appointing me to go to America at this moment, you give ground for belief, all over Europe, *that your affairs there are in a much worse situation than they really are?* and will not my nomination at this moment be a triumph to the Americans and their friends here and elsewhere? It may have the effect of raising hopes and expectations in England which we know cannot be realised. . . . I declare it appears to me that we are proceeding on this occasion with a precipitation which circumstances do not at all justify, and that we shall get into disgrace and difficulties, which a little patience would enable us to avoid."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *November* 18, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 204.

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greater part of its disposable forces still in America, to do this with effect in opposition to a power which boasted of having 300,000 men in Poland, and in possession of the whole strongholds of the country. Lord Castlereagh's views on this crisis are fully developed in a most valuable letter to the Duke of Wellington, dated Vienna, October 25, 1814, shortly after he had arrived there for the opening of the Congress, which affords a key to his whole subsequent conduct in the course of its deliberations.*

* "You will perceive, from my several despatches, that the difference in principle between M. Talleyrand and me is chiefly that I wish to *direct my main efforts to secure an equilibrium in Europe;* to which objects, as far as principle will permit, I wish to make all local points subordinate. M. Talleyrand appears to me, on the contrary, more intent upon particular points of influence than upon the general balance to be established; and his efforts upon *the Neapolitan and Saxon questions* are frequently made at the expense of the more important question of Poland, without essentially serving either of those interests upon which he is most intent.

"I was, from the outset, aware of the extreme difficulty of making Prussia a useful ally in the present discussions, connected closely as she has been with Russia; but it appeared to me that, notwithstanding the King's *liaison* with the Emperor, it ought not to be despaired of, under the known sentiments of the Prussian Cabinet, more especially as it was difficult to found a satisfactory system of balance in Europe, unless Prussia could be induced to take a part.

"Two alternatives alone presented themselves for consideration—a union of the two great German Powers, supported by Great Britain, and thus combining the minor states of Germany together with Holland in *an intermediary system between Russia and France*—or a union of Austria, France, and the southern States, against the northern Powers, with Russia and Prussia in close alliance. It would have been to be wished that the arrangements upon a peace could have been effected in Europe without giving rise to any combination whatever of this nature, and that, at the end of so long a struggle, the several Powers might have enjoyed some repose, without forming calculations that always augment the risks of war; *but the tone and conduct of Russia have disappointed this hope, and forced upon us fresh considerations.*

"In weighing the conveniences and inconveniences of the latter of these alternatives, the objections appeared to me strongly to preponderate, and especially as affecting *our* interests. Necessity might dictate such a system, but not choice. It appeared in the first instance difficult to cement, on account of the fundamental jealousy existing between Austria and France, especially upon the point of Italian preponderance. If adopted in order to control Russian power, and, with this view, should it be supported by Great Britain, it rendered Holland and the Low Countries dependent on France for their support, instead of having Prussia and the northern states of Germany as their natural protectors. It presented in addition the further inconvenience, in case of war, of exposing all the recent cessions by France to reoccupation by French armies, as the seat of war might happen to present itself. These considerations were sufficiently weighty to induce me to be of opinion, that, however pure the intentions of the King of France were, and however friendly, we ought *not to*

But, by a strange coincidence, at the very time when these weighty concerns were devolving on the British plenipotentiary, and the peace and independence of Europe, threatened by such serious dangers, was at stake probably for ages in the arrangements which were in progress, the attention of the people of England was exclusively directed to an object of humanity, honourable to themselves, but when carried to the length it was at that time, extremely detrimental to the general interests of Europe. Poland was threatened with absorption into the immense power of Russia; the independence of Germany was seriously menaced; the throne of the Bourbons was known to be undermined; and Italy was in a state of smothered combustion, arising from the collision between ancient vested interests and modern ardent aspirations, at this moment when so much was at stake, and the future peace and independence of England might

16. Universal passion in Great Britain for the abolition of the slave trade everywhere.

*risk so much upon French connection*, and that it was wiser to preserve, as far as possible, the goodwill of France, whilst we laboured to unite Germany, for its own preservation, against Russia. I was induced to prefer this course, first, as affording the best chance, if Prussia could be brought forward, of averting the Polish danger without a war; and, secondly, if we failed in this object, as opposing the best barrier to further encroachments on the part of Russia, whilst it afforded that natural cover to our interests on the side of Flanders, without leaving them at the mercy of a combination formed somewhat out of the natural course of political interest.

"I have troubled you with this outline of the policy upon which I have been acting here, that you may use your own discretion, as occasions arise, of preparing and reconciling the mind of the French Government to a concert between the two limitrophe Powers against Russian encroachment and dictation. You will find their minds (at least Prince Talleyrand's is) very averse to Russia, and impatient of the notion of any union between Austria and Prussia; yet, while they most inconsistently object to such a union, they admit that it is the only mode in which Prussia can be kept within due bounds. If France were a feeble and menaced Power, she might well feel jealous of such a German alliance; but, as her direct interests are out of all danger, it is unreasonable that she should impede the sole means that remain to Germany of preserving its independence, in order either to indulge a sentiment towards the King of Saxony, or to create a French party amongst the minor States. France need never dread a German league: it is in its nature inoffensive, and there is no reason to fear that the union between Austria and Prussia will be such as to endanger the liberties of other States. Until the determination of Austria and Prussia is more fully established, I have to beg your Grace will make your reasoning general, and not admit that any negotiation is in progress."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to the* DUKE OF WELLINGTON, *Vienna, October* 25, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 173-175.

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depend on a stroke of her diplomatist's pen, Lord Castlereagh was left alone by his country to fight the battle of European independence. Not a public meeting was held to strengthen his hands in the great struggle for Polish independence or the formation of a barrier on the Vistula and the Rhine against the strides of Muscovite or Gallic ambition. There were public meetings in plenty to apply a pressure to the diplomatists supposed to be all powerful, but it was directed to none of these objects. The slave trade was the only subject of interest. The idea was all but universally taken up in Great Britain that now was the time to achieve the grand victory of justice and humanity over cupidity and cruelty. This belief, strongly inculcated by the clergy of all denominations, soon became a perfect national passion. Lord Castlereagh said justly that there was scarcely a town or village in Great Britain in which meetings were not held to petition the Crown or Parliament on the subject. Nothing else was thought of—what was pressed upon Government was that it should be made a condition of the restoration of their colonies to the French or the Dutch that they should instantly abolish the slave trade, and that a day should be fixed after which this traffic should be declared piracy by all the Powers, punishable with death whenever a vessel conveying slaves was taken.*

* "You must really press the Spanish Government to give us some more facilities on the subject of the slave trade, else we can do nothing for them, however well inclined. The nation is bent upon this object. I believe there is hardly a village that has not met and petitioned upon it; both Houses of Parliament are pledged to press it, and the Ministers must make it the basis of their policy. It is particularly important that Spain and Portugal should not separate from all Europe upon it, else prohibitions against the import of their colonial produce will be the probable result. Urge, therefore, the French engagement for five years, and prevail upon them to instruct Labrador accordingly. With respect to the immediate abolition north of the line, if you cannot confine them to the southward of Cape Lopez, press Cape Formoso. . . . You will recollect that Spain had no slave trade of her own previous to our abolition; and it now appears that she imports few really for her own colonies. The greatest proportion of those carried in the first instance to Cuba and Porto Rico are reshipped on American account, and smuggled into the United States, principally up the Mississippi, in defiance of the American laws of abolition. A mutual right of search is of great importance to check abuse."—

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17. Difficulties thrown in the way by the French.

But here a fresh and unforeseen difficulty occurred, over which the British diplomatist had no effective control. The greater part of the ceded colonies had originally belonged to France, and the Government of France were far from sharing the views of the British on the subject. On the contrary, they were informed by their old colonists, and they believed or affected to believe them, that the immediate abolition of the slave trade would prove their ruin, and the French Government insisted that if they acceded to the demand, it could only be on receiving some compensation, either in a pecuniary

LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* SIR H. WELLESLEY, *August* 1, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 73.

"May I venture now to say what I would do were I a member of the Congress? I would first try with all my might to get rid of the article in the treaty of 3d May [postponing the abolition] *entirely* and *immediately*, so that the abolition might be immediate and universal; and I would, if the French would accept it, even give up a colony in exchange; that is, I would leave no stone unturned to secure immediate abolition, if possible. But if, after all my exertions, I could not get it, then I would aim at two things—1st, to reduce the five years [allowed for abolition] to two or three years at most; 2d, to have all the coast north of the line freed from the ravages of the slave trade. After this, I would get a decree from the Congress, that after the two, three, or four years were expired, no nation whatever should be permitted *to carry on the slave trade at all.* After this period it should be declared contrary to the law of nations, and put upon the same footing as piracy. The same seals which guaranteed the government of France to the Bourbons, and the restoration of territory and government to the Spaniards and Portuguese, should guarantee liberty, or freedom from the slave trade, to Africa. A day then should be fixed, after which any slave vessel, found to be such, should be liable to capture, and to be treated as a pirate. This latter clause is essentially necessary. All the contracting Powers, or four or five of the most powerful, should give in their names in combination for the execution of the Act."—MR CLARKSON *to the* DUKE OF WELLINGTON, *September* 11, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 118, 119.

"The general feeling of those with whom I have conversed upon the subject of the French slave trade, seems to be that the decision of the question of the abolition of the slave trade rests so entirely with his Majesty's Government that it would be useless, especially in the present state of the negotiations, to have recourse to other means of influencing its decision than Great Britain herself possesses. All the persons interested in the French colonies, together with their numerous connections in this country, are so impressed with the importance and even necessity of the slave trade to the prosperity of their colonies, that it cannot be doubted that the *voluntary* abandonment of this trade on the part of the French Government would be an unpopular act. That Government, however, it is believed, would escape all blame if it were understood that the abolition of the French slave trade was exacted by Great Britain as the indispensable condition of the restoration of her colonies to France."—ZACHARY MACAULAY *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *May* 29, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 47, 48.

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form or by the cession of an island for the sacrifice required. Lord Castlereagh did his utmost to enforce the demand; but Talleyrand held resolutely for a compensation; and, to solve the difficulty, Lord Liverpool expressed the willingness of the British Government to cede an island to purchase the consent of France, and suggested Trinidad for that purpose.* This arrangement, it will be immediately seen, was not gone into; but it must always be regarded as an honourable incident to the British Government and nation, that they were willing to abandon part of their conquests for an object of no value whatever to themselves, but important only as tending to promote the general interests of justice and humanity. And it is a curious proof how much the British people are subject to sudden and uncontrollable impulses, especially when springing from the generous affections, and how erroneous is the opinion generally entertained on the Continent that they are entirely governed by the selfish, that while the great and important arrangements in progress at the Congress of Vienna, on which the peace and independence of Europe, and their own and their children's

* "Upon considering the matter thoroughly, I do think that, especially after what has passed, it would be desirable to have some producible record that we had offered to France a pecuniary compensation, or an island, for the immediate abolition of the slave trade. Some such proposition is certainly expected by the abolitionists. These expectations have been encouraged by the report of the disposition of the French Government to listen to it; and unless the attempt is made in some shape, in which it can be shown it has been made and rejected, I am apprehensive we shall not stand well with many of our friends. I have the less disinclination to the offer of an island for this object, since it has been determined to retain Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice. These settlements are most valuable to us, not only as they are occupied almost exclusively by British proprietors, but likewise as they contain the principal cotton establishments in America for the use of our manufactures. The retention of them will add, however, in some degree, to the colonial jealousy which exists on the Continent of Great Britain; and I have reason to believe that the planters and merchants interested in the settlements in question did not expect that we should keep them. Under these circumstances, I think we can afford to offer a West India colony for the accomplishment of an object which the nation has certainly so much at heart. I would offer none but a West India colony, and I have already stated to you my reasons for preferring to offer Trinidad." — LORD LIVERPOOL *to the* DUKE OF WELLINGTON, *September* 23, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 132, 133.

interests were so dependent, excited scarcely any attention, the nation was convulsed from one end to the other, and prepared to make considerable sacrifices to attain the discontinuance of the slave trade in a few foreign West Indian islands! There was not a vestige of the selfish feelings in this passion; on the contrary, they would have prompted a directly opposite course of conduct; for the belief at that time was universal among the abolitionists that free labour was more profitable than slave, and that in forcing the former on the French colonists, they were only increasing the resources of their own commercial rivals.

18. Preliminary question which occupied the Congress.

In this divided and diverging state of general opinions in the Governments and nations interested in the arrangements of the Congress, there was little chance that they would arrive, without great difficulty, at a harmonious opinion. It was soon apparent that the jealousy and apprehension entertained by the other Powers of "*les quatre*" had little foundation. The divisions of themselves were greater than those with which they were beset from others. The first question upon which a serious division took place, previous to the meeting of the Congress for the despatch of general business, was the one, "What Powers were to be admitted to a deliberative vote in the proceedings?" It was generally expected by the representatives of the other States that Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain, the parties to the still pending treaty of Chaumont, would alone be admitted. M. Talleyrand, in the outset, presented a note, in which he contended that as peace was now happily re-established between the whole Powers, and the object of the Congress was to establish such arrangements as might promote the continuance of that blessing, the wishes and interests of all should be consulted; and, in consequence, that other Powers, in particular France, Spain, Portugal, and Sweden, should be admitted. Contrary to expectation, Lord Castlereagh

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supported this proposal, and M. de Metternich did the same. In consequence of this division in the parties to the treaty of Chaumont, the representatives of these eight Powers were admitted to a deliberative vote, while those of Murat, King of Naples, and the Kings of Bavaria, Sicily, Saxony, the Netherlands, Hanover, besides the Swiss and Genoese republics, though not admitted to the conference of the greater Powers, were to be present at Vienna to attend to their interests, and make their wishes known to such of the greater Powers as might be inclined to support them. The representatives of the great Powers were, for Austria, Prince Metternich; for France, Prince Talleyrand; for Russia, Count Nesselrode; for Prussia, M. de Hardenberg; for Great Britain, Lord Castlereagh; for Spain, M. de Labrador; for Portugal, M. de Palmella; and for Sweden, M. de Lowenhielm. At a meeting of these ministers, held on the 8th October, it was determined to postpone the opening of the Congress till the 1st November; to give time for some understanding to be arrived at on the principal points at issue.[1]

[1] Congrès de Vienne, i. 49; Cap. i. 65, 66; Thiers, xviii. 517.

19. Separation of the Congress into committees.

Previous to the formal meeting of the Congress on 1st November, however, several committees were appointed, intrusted with the task of bringing, by the interchange of confidential communications, the most important questions to such a degree of maturity that they could be submitted to the final determination of the Congress of the greater Powers. The two most important of these were, the committee on the affairs of Germany, and that on those of Poland and the conquered territories. The first consisted of the representatives of the five principal German Powers, and the duty with which it was charged consisted in arranging the conditions of the great confederacy which had been agreed on by the treaty of Paris of 30th May. With regard to the second, it was agreed amongst themselves that the disposal of the territories which had been wrested from France by conquest should be at the disposal of the four great Powers which had

conducted the war: and the duty with which they were intrusted was immense; for the territories which they had at their disposal contained 31,000,000 of inhabitants. France and Spain were nominally to be consulted, but only after the real resolutions had been taken in secret by the four Allied Powers. The disposal of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, including the general settlement of Poland, was also left to Austria, Russia, and Prussia, with Great Britain as umpire; a situation which, from the known divisions between the great Powers on that subject, gave the representative of the latter Power a great degree of importance. The affair of Saxony was devolved upon the same Powers, upon the principle that its territories had been won by conquest, and therefore were at the disposal of the conquering Powers. Practically speaking, the arrangement of the conquered territories was intended to lie with the Powers which had signed the treaty of Chaumont; for although France, in the instructions to Talleyrand, had enjoined him to contend for the principle, "that the rights of conquest should not be considered as binding, except so far as recognised by treaty;" yet, as her territories were, generally speaking, reduced to the ancient limits by the treaty of 31st May, her weight in the disposal of the conquered territories could not be very considerable.[1]*

[1] Hard. xii. 453-455; Cap. i. 75, 76; Thiers, xviii. 457-460; Congrès de Vienne, i. 48, 49, and 248-251.

The Cabinets of Vienna and Berlin had concerted together the basis of the German confederation which was submitted to the German committee on 14th October.

* "La France n'apporte au Congrès aucune vue d'ambition ou d'intérêt personnel. Remplacée dans ses anciennes limites, elle ne songea plus à les etendre, semblable à la mer qui ne franchit les rivages que quand elle a été soulevée par les tempêtes. Ses armées, chargées de gloire, n'aspirent plus à de nouvelles conquêtes. Delivrée de cette oppression dont elle avait été bien moins l'instrument que la victime, heureuse d'avoir retrouvée ses princes legitimes, et avec eux le repos qu'elle pouvait craindre d'avoir perdu pour toujours, elle n'avait point de prétentions qu'elle voulait former. *Elle n'en a enlevé; elle n'en élèvera aucune;* mais il lui restait à désirer que l'œuvre de la restauration s'accomplit pour toute l'Europe comme pour elle; que partout et pour jamais l'ésprit de la Révolution cessat."—*Note confidentiel*, M. DE TALLEYRAND *à* M. DE METTERNICH, *Decembre* 19, 1814; *Congrès de Vienne*, iv. 231; CAPEFIGUE, i. 77.

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20. Formation of the German Constitution. Oct. 14.

It contained the great and important elements of union against external aggression, and the prohibition of internal wars. To avoid the endless confusion arising from a multiplicity of votes, it was agreed that the committee should consist of five Powers, and that their representatives should form the congress. The persons chosen for that high office were the most illustrious on the Continent for statesman-like wisdom and practical experience.* They did not experience so much difficulty in their labours as might have been anticipated, though some of the points embraced in their declarations were those on which the movement and conservative parties were directly at issue, and which, in after times, produced such divisions as well nigh split the confederacy in pieces. But the importance of the points was not then generally appreciated, and the world was too thankful to have escaped from the terrible nightmare of French oppression to disquiet itself with any anxieties with which its morning prospects might be clouded. It was laid down—"1. That the States (*Die stände und freie städte*) including Austria and Prussia for their German possessions, should be united in a confederacy bearing the name of the German Confederacy. 2. The object of the confederation is, the guarantee of external security and independence, *as well as of the constitutional rights of every class of the nation.* 3. In forming that union, which has for its object the good of the common country, the members of the confederation, all and each of them, reserve to themselves the full and entire enjoyment of their rights of sovereignty, in so far as those rights are not limited by the preceding article, it being understood that these rights are to be formally announced in the federation act. 4. The object of the confederation was to be attained by the establishment of a

* The States and representatives forming the German committees were as follows:—1. Austria, Prince Metternich and Baron de Wessenberg; 2. Prussia, Prince Hardenberg and Baron Humboldt; 3. Bavaria, Field-Marshal Prince de Wrede; 4. Hanover, M. Le Comte de Hardenberg, minister; 5. Wirtemberg, Baron Linden.—*Congrès de Vienne*, i. p. 54.

federal diet, combined with the division of Germany into a certain number of circles; that diet to be composed of a council of the chiefs of circles, and of a council of the other States; and by the influence which the federal diet will accord under the surveillance of the diet to each chief of a circle over the States of his circle." Various minute regulations followed for fixing the Princes and States which were to compose these circles, and the powers they were respectively to enjoy. But the important points of prohibiting private wars among each other, or external wars, by individual states, on Powers beyond the limits of the confederacy, as well as the privileges to be granted to the inhabitants of the different States, were provided for in separate articles which, from their great importance, must be given in the original.[1]*



[1] Congrès de Vienne, i. 61-64.

* "9. Pour empêcher qu'un état de la Confédération ne compromettre la sûreté extérieure de l'Allemagne, chaque état n'ayant pas de possession hors de l'Allemagne s'engage à ne faire la guerre pour son compte contre des Puissances étrangères, ni de prendre part aux guerres de celles-ci, ni de conclure, sans agrément de la Confédération, des traités d'alliance ou de subside, ou d'autres conventions relatives à une cession de troupes. Lorsque les états ayant des possessions étrangères sont enveloppés dans une guerre avec d'autres Puissances, il dependra de la Confédération d'y prendre part si l'état belligérant le demande.

"10. Les princes d'Allemagne renoncent également au droit de faire la guerre entre eux et soumettent leurs differens (en tant qu'ils ne peuvent pas être vidés par une instance austrégale) d'après des formes à determiner à la sentence qui prononceront à la fois les chefs de cercle et un tribunal fédéral. Ce tribunal prononcera aussi sur les plaintes qui y seront portées pour violation de l'acte fédératif en tel ou tel pays.

"11. L'acte fédératif etablit la necessité d'une constitution d'états dans chaque état de la Confédération et fixe un minimum des droits des états en s'en remettant aux nombres de la Confédération, non seulement *pour accorder une plus grande etendue de prérogative à leurs états*, mais aussi de leur donner une organisation analogue aux coutumes et au caractère des habitans et à l'observance."—*Articles Concertés entre l'Autriche et la Prusse*, 16 *Octobre* 1814; *Congrès de Vienne*, i. 61-66.

It was finally determined that the diet of the Confederation was to be always presided over by Austria, and was to consist of two bodies. 1. An ordinary assembly to be formed of seventeen members—one from each of the separate states, except some of the very small ones, who were grouped together to elect one, and the four free towns of Frankfort, Bremen, Lubeck, and Hamburg, who also combined to return one member. This assembly was to be permanent at Frankfort, and to settle all ordinary matters. 2. A general assembly to decide upon all important organic and general subjects, to be composed of sixty-nine voters—each state returning a number of voters in proportion to its territorial magnitude and importance.—*Acte pour la Constitution Federale de l'Allemagne, du* 8 *Juin* 1815; *Congrès de Vienne*, v. 301-309.

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21. Concord of Russia and Prussia as to Poland and Saxony.

The establishment of this great confederacy, embracing all the German states, and providing alike for external independence and internal peace, was so obvious an advantage, that, contrary to what usually occurs in such cases where the resistance to any considerable change is in proportion to its utility, it met with very little opposition. Beyond all doubt it was the most important and beneficial change introduced by the Congress of Vienna, and the one to which the blessed peace of forty years which since ensued is chiefly to be ascribed. But the same concord was far from being evinced on the next great question which presented itself, and that was the disposal of Poland and Saxony. These two questions in reality formed only one, so entirely were the Cabinets of St Petersburg and Berlin at one in regard to the course to be pursued towards these two States. To incorporate all Poland into one state, of which he was to be the head, and to indemnify Prussia by the whole of Saxony and Austrian Italy, was, as already stated, the fixed determination of the Czar, in which he was cordially supported by the King of Prussia and his Cabinet. On the very threshold of this question, however, they were met by a formidable objection. As the whole of Poland had been shared out between the partitioning Powers, it was impossible to restore it without taking considerable territories from some or all of them; and in this resumption Austria and Prussia would be the sufferers, without any equivalent, if not found elsewhere. Alexander, indeed, loudly insisted on his disinterested policy in agreeing to surrender by far the largest portion of old Poland—viz., Lithuania, with its nine millions of inhabitants, to form the basis of the restored state; but it could not escape notice that this generosity was apparent only and delusive: that if Russia agreed to the severance of Lithuania from her imperial domains, it was only that it might form part of the kingdom of Poland, of which, with vast additions, her sovereign was to become the head; and that, if the liberties of Europe were to be endangered by the Muscovite Power,

it would be little consolation to find that they were threatened by the imperial and royal armies of Russia and Poland, not by the single arms of the former alone. Treaties also, stubborn and numerous, opposed themselves to the realisation of this, in appearance generous, in truth ambitious, design. By the treaty of Kalisch, 28th February 1813, of Reichenbach, 15th June 1813, and Töplitz, 9th September 1813, it had been expressly stipulated that the Grand-duchy of Warsaw should be amicably divided between the three partitioning Powers, as nearly as may be in proportion to the several allotments at the last partition; that Prussia should be raised up to ten millions of inhabitants, and Austria restored to the whole of Illyria. It would be impossible to reconcile these stipulations with the pretensions now advanced by Russia, which were substantially that, under pretext of restoring the ancient kingdom of Poland, she should be put in possession of the whole of it.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 427-429; Cap. i. 87; Hard. xii. 456-458.

22. Which is brought to light, and extremely irritates France.

Sensible of this objection, and aware of the strenuous opposition which the open advancing any such pretension on the part of Russia and Prussia would awaken on the part of Austria and Great Britain, the two Northern Cabinets were careful to conceal their designs and secret understanding until their preparations were so far complete that they could set the other Powers of Europe at defiance. In spite of all their skill, however, the Cabinets of Vienna, London, and Paris, soon got information of what was going on. Before eight days had elapsed after the assembling of the Congress in the end of September, the united action of Russia and Prussia had roused suspicion, and their designs on Saxony and Poland been detected. Great was the indignation of the French Government on its discovery of their plan with regard to the former country. It had not even been asked to concur, as Austria and England had been, in the dethronement of the King of Saxony, and not only was alarmed at so considerable an addition being made to the strength of a rival power, but felt mortified by a step so important and ma-

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terial to the future balance of power in Europe being undertaken without its concurrence being so much as asked. It was perfectly known that this transference of Saxony was only the first in a series of changes to the advantage of the Northern Powers, and that the annexation of the crown of Poland to that of Russia was equally agreed upon. M. de Talleyrand, accordingly, no sooner heard of these decisive steps than he took the most active measures to counteract them. He strongly represented to Lord Castlereagh and Prince Metternich that Russia had now thrown off the mask; that it would soon be brought down to the Oder, its vassal to the Elbe, and then, intrenched in the centre of Germany, the Czar would become the arbiter of Europe.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 450, 451.

23. Indignation of Alexander at this.

Nothing could exceed the indignation of Alexander, when he heard of these movements on the part of the French representative. That sovereign, usually so courteous and bland—so penetrated, even to a fault, with the generous affections—became suddenly irritable and haughty. He was never tired of inveighing against the ingratitude of men. The Germans for whom he had done so much, the English who had by his aid come victorious out of a mortal strife, the Bourbons whom he had placed on the throne, the French whom he had delivered from a terrible tyranny, were coalescing against him, or silently looking on, when his dearest wishes were on the point of being realised. It was against France and M. de Talleyrand, in particular, that his indignation was directed. He fully expected support in all his projects from that Power, for whom he had done so much, and evinced such generosity; and least of all did he anticipate opposition from a sovereign and cabinet which, in a manner, owed their political existence to his support. In addition to these reasons of state, drawn from public policy, Alexander had private grounds of offence against Louis XVIII. That monarch had evinced little respect for his advice; he had not decorated him with the *cordon*

*bleu*, which he had bestowed on the Prince Regent of England; he had said openly, that under God he owed his restoration to the throne of his ancestors to that prince; he had refused his request of a peerage for M. de Caulaincourt, and raised provoking objections against a projected union between the Duke de Berri and the Russian Grand-duchess Anne. Seeing the Czar thus inflamed, and fearful that his anger might lead to serious consequences, especially so far as France was concerned, the wise Nesselrode advised his imperial master to propose a private conference with M. de Talleyrand, which was instantly and joyfully acceded to. It took place accordingly, and the particulars were the same night sent to Paris by Talleyrand, and have been recently published in M. Thiers's *History*.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 451-453.

24. Interview of Talleyrand with Alexander. Sept. 30.

The Czar received the veteran diplomatist with a dry and haughty air, very different from the usual studied courtesy of his manner. Talleyrand, however, was too consummate a master of diplomatic address, and had been too long accustomed to the violent sallies of Napoleon's temper, to be disconcerted by this reception. "What is the state of your country?" asked the Czar, abruptly, when the French minister was ushered into the room. "Excellent," replied Talleyrand; "far better than could have been hoped for—as good as your Majesty could desire." "And public opinion?" "It is improving every day." "And the progress of liberal opinion?" "Nowhere is the progress more real and satisfactory." "And the press?" "It is free, with the exception of some restrictions indispensable in the first days of a new Government." "And the army?" "Excellent: we have 130,000 men under our standards, which, in a month, may be raised to 300,000." "And the marshals?" "Which of them, Sire?" "Oudinot?" "He is devoted." "Soult?" "He was in bad humour at first; they have given him the command in Brittany, he is satisfied, and evinces the greatest zeal." "And Ney?" "He suffers

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under the loss of his endowments, but he trusts that your Majesty will put a period to his inconveniences." "And your Chambers? I am told they are not at one with the Government." "Who can have told you such a falsehood? There are, as in every commencement, some difficulties; but after twenty-five years of revolutions, it is miraculous that we should have arrived at the tranquillity we enjoy." "And are you satisfied with your position?" "Sire, the confidence and kindness of the King have surpassed my most sanguine hopes."

25. Concluded.

At each of these answers an ironical smile passed over the features of the Czar, bespeaking incredulity in the answers of the veteran diplomatist. At length, having exhausted these preliminary and tentative interrogatories, Alexander approached the real objects of the conference. "Let us now come to our affairs: are they to be concluded?" "It depends only on your Majesty to finish them in the most glorious manner, and to the advantage of all Europe." At these words the Czar could scarcely contain himself, and he broke forth on the ingratitude he had experienced, and especially the resistance to his wishes which had been opposed by France. "I think the Bourbons owe me something; now is the time to evince their sense of it in deeds, and not merely in words." "Without contesting," replied Talleyrand, "the obligations of the august master whom I have the honour to serve towards your Majesty, we cannot forget the rights of Europe, which we must respect, especially after having overturned a man whom we justly accuse of having trampled them all under his feet." "The rights of Europe," replied Alexander, "which you have now conjured up to oppose to me, are such as I do not recognise. Between independent Powers *there are no rights, but such as suit every one's convenience: I know of no others.*" "Unhappy Europe! unhappy Europe!" rejoined Talleyrand, raising his hands above his head, "what then will become of you?" The Czar, upon this,

said, "Well then, be it so; it is then war! war! I have 200,000 men in Poland; let them come and chase me from it. Besides, I have the consent of all the Powers to what I desire; you alone oppose it and present an obstacle which may break an accord on the point of becoming general." "France," replied Talleyrand, "neither desires nor fears war; but if unfortunately it should become universal, she will at least wage it on this occasion for the maintenance of the rights of all, aided by the universal sympathy and support of many of the Powers;" for he well knew that the general concurrence of which the Czar boasted had in reality no existence. Mutually irritated, the Emperor and diplomatist now separated. Before M. de Talleyrand withdrew, the natural courtesy of Alexander prevailed over his passion, and he held out his hand to him. M. de Talleyrand took it, and the Czar forced a smile, but a convulsive movement of the fingers revealed the secret exasperation of his mind.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 454, 455; see also Cap. i. 78, 88, and Hard. xii. 46.

26. Lord Castlereagh and Metternich come to an understanding.

Lord Castlereagh, as before explained, was inclined, though with deep regret at the necessity which compelled him, to adopt the line to support the annexation of Saxony to Prussia, deeming that addition to the strength of the second German state indispensable to preserve the balance of power in Europe, and in an especial manner called for in order to secure the support, or, at all events, the neutrality, of the Court of Berlin in resisting the encroachments of Russia on the Vistula.* Metter-

* "Quant à la question de Saxe, je vous déclare, que si l'incorporation de la tolalité de ce pays dans la monarchie Prussienne est nécessaire pour assurer un si grand bien à l'Europe, quelque peine que j'exprime personellement à l'idée de voir une aussi ancienne maison si profondement affligée, je ne saurai nourrir aucune répugnance, morale ou politique, contre la mésure elle-même. Si jamais un souverain s'est placé lui-même dans le cas de devoir être sacrifié à la tranquillité future de l'Europe, je crois que c'est le Roi de Saxe, qui, par ses tergiversations perpetuelles, et parcequ'il a été non seulement le plus dévoué, mais aussi le plus favorisé, des vassaux de Buonaparte, contribua de tout son pouvoir, et avec empressement en sa double qualité de chef des états Allemands et d'état Polonais à pousser l'envahissement jusque dans le cœur de la Russie."—*Note de* LORD CASTLEREAGH *à* M. DE HARDENBERG, *Octobre* 11, 1814; CAPEFIGUE, i. 80; and *Castlereagh Correspondence, MS.*

On the other hand, M. Talleyrand stated at the same time:—"L'indépend-

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nich again, though he felt the necessity of strengthening Prussia, was not inclined to do so beyond a certain point. He had no desire to see the Cabinet of Berlin so powerful as to contest with that of Vienna the supremacy in the confederacy, and he was reluctant to establish so dangerous a precedent as that of entirely stripping an ancient reigning family of their dominions. He desired, therefore, to leave a certain part of his territories to the King of Saxony, including his beautiful capital, but to assign a considerable portion of his dominions to the King of Prussia in return for what he might lose in the Grand-duchy of Posen to the advantage of Russia.[1] But meanwhile Alexander was resolutely bent on restoring Poland; his armies were all halted there in their homeward march from Germany; the Grand-duke Constantine, who commanded at Warsaw, was unwearied in his attentions to the Polish nobility; and the Russian agents and partisans everywhere spread through the country the reports that the Emperor was bent on restoring the lost nationality of their country—that he would do what Napoleon had left undone—and that now was the time, by rallying round the Russian standards, to restore their long-lost native land to its separate existence.* At the same time the Em-

[1] Hard. xii. 459-461.

ance des couronnes, les droits de legitimité, l'equilibre de l'Allemagne, les égards dûs à un roi réveré par ses vertus, les liens de parente, et une analogie d'infortune, avaient paru à Louis XVIII. de justes motifs de défendre la cause de Frederic Auguste; il avait même declaré dans son conseil qu'il ne consentirait jamais à la cession entière de la Saxe, et laisserait à ses successeurs la tâche penible de la sanctionner."—CAPEFIGUE, i. 81.

* "The Russian minister, the Comte de Stackelberg, has taken all the Poles here under his protection, and Madame de Stackelberg presented several Polish ladies at the last court. He made no secret, I believe, that he acts by the orders of his Court, and he pays the most marked civilities even to the inhabitants of the old Gallicia. The Poles in general are pleased at the idea of becoming a kingdom attached to Russia, *for the present*, in the idea that it will lead to their future independence. Some of the more reasonable look upon this as illusory, and flatter themselves that the day will come when Austria will espouse their cause in order to wrest Poland from Russia. But it is remarkable that among all the Poles whom I see (and I see a great many) there is not one individual who is attached either to Russia or to any other Power, but as they think that that Power may ultimately favour their views for the independence of Poland."—HON. F. LAMB *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Vienna, June* 25, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 59.

peror, who was extremely exasperated at Talleyrand and the French Government, held out promises of support to Murat in his claims for the throne of Naples, which he knew would touch both Austria and France on the tenderest point. Alarmed at these concurring dangers, which seemed to portend new political combinations, and possibly a renewal of wars at no distant period, Metternich resolved to bring up his last resource to resist the progress of the Russian Emperor. He requested Lord Castlereagh, therefore, to solicit an audience of the Czar; "knowing," says Thiers, "that he could not oppose to him a more redoubtable adversary." It was immediately accorded; but instead of fixing an hour, as requested, in his own hotel, the Czar *himself called on the British diplomatist at his dwelling.* He could not have given him a more touching proof of esteem, or evinced more clearly how much he had at heart the objects to be discussed at the interview.*

27. Lord Castlereagh's observations to Alexander.

Lord Castlereagh, much touched by this flattering proceeding, redoubled in his respectful manner towards his illustrious guest; "but he remained," says Thiers, "a true Englishman—that is to say, immovable; and, wishing to manage everything, he yielded nothing." He began by referring to the numerous occasions on which England had endeavoured to accommodate itself to his wishes; he reminded him that she had aided him in 1812 to conclude the treaty of Bucharest with the Turks, when hard pressed by Napoleon in Russia, which secured him the possession of Bessarabia; that she had induced Persia to grant him a better frontier towards Georgia; that, in fine, to secure Russia the possession of Finland, she

* "M. de Metternich, au lieu de retenir Lord Castlereagh, le laissa marcher en avant, certain qu'on ne pouvait pas opposer à Alexandre un plus redoutable adversaire. Indépendamment de son caractère entier, Lord Castlereagh avait l'avantage de représenter la Puissance la plus désintéressée dans les distributions territoriales du Continent, et en outre celle qui payait toutes es autres. Or cette supériorité de celui qui donne sur celui qui reçoit, perçait toujours dans les relations de l'Angleterre avec ses alliés."—THIERS, xviii. 486.

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had consented, though with very great reluctance, to the annexation of Norway to Sweden. He then quoted the three treaties of Kalisch, Reichenbach, and Töplitz in 1813, by all of which it was expressly provided that the Grand-duchy of Warsaw should be divided among the three partitioning Powers, not become the exclusive appanage of one of them. He said, in conclusion, respectfully, but firmly, "I entreat your Majesty to reflect on the disquietude which Russia is causing to Europe, and the trouble which the line it is pursuing has already afforded to the Allies. I do not scruple to tell your Majesty that unless care is taken, the Congress of Vienna, from which it was hoped would date the reign of justice and moderation among civilised nations, will present nothing but *a scene of ambition of itself sufficient to make the reign of Napoleon be regretted.*"[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 487, 488.

28. Answer of Alexander.

Profoundly irritated at these intrepid words, which sounded strange in the ears of a despotic Eastern potentate, accustomed to see everything yield to his will, Alexander was yet sufficiently master of himself to be capable of answering with moderation and judgment. "The two treaties of Russia with Turkey, and with Persia," said he, "were, it is true, facilitated by Great Britain; but this was done in order that the armies of Russia, disengaged from Eastern wars, might be rendered disposable against Napoleon, the common enemy of both: Norway was promised to Bernadotte, but that was only to detach him from the French alliance, and secure his co-operation against France. I do not, therefore, consider myself as weighed down by the weight of benefits, considering the motives of the benefactor. The treaties of Kalisch, Reichenbach, and Töplitz, contain, it is true, the stipulation alluded to, in regard to the Grand-duchy of Warsaw; but that was made in reference to a state of things quite different from what has now come to pass. The utmost which was then hoped for, was to succeed in opposing some barrier to the ambition of

Napoleon, but by no means to force him back to the Rhine, and precipitate him from the throne. By the unexpected flow of success which has followed the conclusion of these treaties, the other Powers of Europe have gained immensely; Austria has regained the frontier of the Inn, the Tyrol, Italy; England, Holland and Belgium. It is not just in these circumstances that Russia and Prussia, which, during the conflict, have incurred very different dangers from England, should derive no accession of territory from this unexpected flow of good fortune, by which their less endangered Allies have so largely benefited. As to Saxony, I am pledged to give it to my friend and fellow-soldier, the King of Prussia; as to Poland, to restore it to its lost nationality by engagements to the Poles themselves.

"In my eyes the partition of Poland was an offence, the moral consequences of which have never ceased to weigh down Europe. It is at once honourable and politic to endeavour to repair them. Russia alone has the means of doing so; for the major part of the Polish provinces fell to her on the partition; and that was not the case either with France, which failed in the attempt to restore Poland, nor with Austria or Prussia, who have never even thought of such a thing. On the other hand, Russia, by abandoning the large part of Poland which she held in her hands, with a small sacrifice from Prussia —a sacrifice the compensation for which was already agreed on—by endowing the restored kingdom with liberal institutions, and impressing moderation in the use made of them, would achieve a work which would be the glory of Europe and of the Congress of Vienna. I propose to myself that noble object; I am on the eve of accomplishing it, and I will not be diverted from it. Besides this, when my armies entered Poland, they made by my authority certain promises to detach the Poles from Napoleon, and I am resolved to keep my word. I am not one of those sovereigns who make promises under the

29. Concluded.

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pressure of necessity, and retract them with the same facility when the danger is past. What I have promised I will perform; and I think the services I have rendered to Europe are such as entitle me, on the other side, to some concession to my wishes, and some regard to my pledged honour."[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 489, 490.

30. Lord Castlereagh's reply.

It must be admitted that the annexation of Poland to Russia, which was the real point at issue, could not have been more forcibly and eloquently defended than it was by the Czar on this occasion. Lord Castlereagh, however, preserving always the most respectful demeanour, and using only the most measured and polite expressions, was nowise disconcerted or diverted from his object. "The partition of Poland," said he, "was a crime; and it is not England, which has from the first opposed it, which will ever maintain the contrary. She is prepared, therefore, instantly to accede to the restoration of Poland, and there is nothing she desires more ardently. But to render it effectual for good, it must be complete and entire. If, therefore, Austria will restore what she yet holds of Poland, and Russia and Prussia will do the same, and out of the portions thus restored you will form a kingdom apart, independent of its neighbours, and seat on its throne a *Polish king*, or, if not Polish, a sovereign independent of the partitioning Powers—if, in addition, you will give the restored kingdom institutions sufficiently monarchical and liberal—England will not only applaud this measure, but contribute to its completion, though it should cost her much to do so. But are the three partitioning Powers prepared in good faith to commence the great work of restitution? If they are, is it possible to find a king capable of undertaking it? Are the Poles capable of living together in harmony, and comporting themselves like men of sense, capable of forming a nation, and bearing the strains of liberal institutions? Grave doubts may be entertained on all these points, and there is too much reason, on the contrary, to believe that

the restoration of which you speak is but a dream. But if, instead of that restoration, complete and European, you re-establish Poland only in part, and, to deceive the world, call it by the name of the old commonwealth, and render it as large as possible in order to hand it over with its restored name and increased strength to Russia, you will perpetrate an illusion on Europe which will never be submitted to. Consider, Sire, what is due to the loyalty of your own exalted character, the alarms already spreading to such a degree that the Congress is regarded in many places as already dissolved, and permit me to supplicate you, for the repose of the world and your own glory, to renounce pretensions which you must feel are inadmissible."[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 491, 492.

31. Measures of Talleyrand in consequence, to propitiate Russia.

On the day following, Lord Castlereagh prepared and transmitted to the Czar a long note, in which the same arguments were ably stated, and every consideration urged which could induce him to recede from his aggressive policy. At the same time he communicated to M. Talleyrand the substance of his interview, who lost no time in transmitting it to his Court, from the archives of which M. Thiers has extracted the important document, which thus comes to us from the best and most unsuspected of all sources,—the testimony of an unwilling and sometimes hostile witness. Talleyrand himself was charmed to find the English diplomatist thus decidedly opposed to the Czar, for it divided his two most formidable enemies; and he immediately proceeded to turn it to his own advantage, by insinuating to the Emperor that it was on the preservation of Saxony that the Cabinet of the Tuileries was chiefly set, and that, if this was consented to, no obstacle would be thrown on their part to the coveted acquisitions of Russia in Poland.[2] *

[2] Hard. xii. 162; Thiers, xviii. 493; Cap. i. 92.

* The real views of Lord Castlereagh at this period, and the length he was prepared to have gone in resisting the domination of Russia, are well explained in a secret letter to Mr Vansittart, Chancellor of the Exchequer, on November 11, 1814:—

"The progress of our revenue, as contained in your interesting statement,

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32. Russia occupies Poland, and gives Saxony to Prussia.

On the eve of the formal opening of the Congress on the 1st November, Alexander, in order to determine, if possible, the indecision of the other Powers by the example of *un fait accompli*, resolved to withdraw his troops from Saxony into Poland, and to transfer the former country into the custody of Prussia. This actually took place on the 8th November 1814. By a proclamation issued on that day by Prince Repnin, the Russian governor of Saxony, in whose hands, since the battle of Leipsic, the administration of the country had been provisionally, and as a matter of necessity placed, it was announced, "That the supreme administration of the kingdom of Saxony, placed, in virtue of an arrangement between Russia and Prussia, and to which Austria and England have adhered, *in the hands of his Majesty the King of Prussia*, having been solemnly handed over to-day by me to the governor and generals named by his Majesty, the inhabitants of Saxony are required to put the same confidence in, and manifest the same spirit of order and obedience towards them by which they have been distinguished during my administration. The Emperor, my august master, will never cease to feel an interest in the affairs of Saxony; and in surrender-

is highly satisfactory; but we shall have occasion for all our resources, and you may rely on my desire to economise them as much as possible. The great question in my hands is the Dutch loan, which connects itself, however, with our claim to retain Demarara, Berbice, and Essequibo.

"If the Emperor of Russia shall persist in refusing to acknowledge his treaties,* or to treat in pursuance of them *à l'aimable*, I shall have no difficulty in stopping that demand, provided that I can secure the Low Countries against his arms and his intrigues. But if his Imperial Majesty shall change his tone, and make a reasonable arrangement of frontier on the side of Poland, if he shall allow the other European arrangements to be equitably settled, including those of Holland, and alter his tariff besides, then, my dear Vansittart, I must come upon you for my pound of flesh—or, if I cannot stop his power upon the Vistula, and it breaks loose, and shall carry everything before it to the Meuse, I cannot answer for the consequences: I only beg you will believe I shall do my best to save your purse. The engagements with Holland shall be no obstacle to this, as I had rather give the Prince of Orange something more to defend and fortify the Low Countries, *than assist the credit of a Calmuck Prince to overturn Europe.*"—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* RIGHT HON. N. VANSITTART, *Vienna, November* 11, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 200.

* Viz., of Kalisch, Reichenbach, and Töplitz.

ing the government of the country to a Prince eminently noble, virtuous, and generous, he trusts he has done the best in his power for the happiness of provinces shaken by so many storms, and standing so much in need of tranquillity."[1] As the die was now cast, the King of Saxony addressed to the Congress an eloquent and plaintive memorial protesting against the transference of his dominions to another Power, and invoking the principles on which the Coalition had maintained the contest against Napoleon. The proclamation of Prince Repnin affirmed with truth that it was issued by Russia and Prussia, with the consent of Austria and England. The two latter Powers had, as already mentioned, during the course of the negotiation, given what might be construed into a reluctant consent to it, from a sense of the absolute impossibility in any other way of providing in Germany an adequate counterpoise to the power either of France or Russia. Metternich, however, did not disguise his extreme reluctance to consent to the entire dethronement of an ancient sovereign house without an indemnity; and Lord Castlereagh said that it "was with the *deepest regret* that he felt himself compelled to accede to the arrangement."[2]

[1] Congrès de Vienne, i. 321-323.

Oct. 22.

Oct. 11.

[2] Hard. xii. 459, 460.

33. Warlike preparations of Russia.

This surrender of the government of the whole of Saxony by the Russian to the Prussian authorities, was the result of a secret treaty between these two Powers, which had been concluded without the privity or knowledge of the other Powers. But public acts soon ensued on both sides which put the hostile views of both parties in the clearest light, and proved that the pacific congress was on the verge of a new war possibly as long and bloody as that which had just been concluded. Austria and England protested in the strongest manner against their provisional assent to a matter still under discussion being taken as authority for such an unaccountable proceeding. On the 9th November the Grand-duke Constantine left Vienna, and proceeded to Warsaw, where he took the command, and immediately addressed a proclamation to the Poles,

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in which he said, "The Emperor, your powerful protector, appeals to you. Unite around his standards. Let your hands take up arms for the defence of your country, and for the preservation of your political existence." Nesselrode wrote to the Emperor that "eight millions of Poles were resolved to defend the independence of their country." The agitation in Warsaw was extreme; the lure of restoring the Polish nationality had entirely succeeded. The whole Russian armies retreating through Poland were halted, to the number of 200,000 men, and the fortresses of Thorn and Modlin put in a posture of defence. The Emperor meanwhile abated nothing of his haughty bearing, and frequently repeated his favourite expression in circles where it was sure to be immediately conveyed to the ministers of France and Austria, "I have three hundred thousand men in Poland; let them come and take it if they please."[1]

[1] Lord Castlereagh to Lord Liverpool, Nov. 16, 1810, MS.; Thiers, xviii. 493-507, and 543, 546.

34. Change in the policy of England regarding Saxony.

Lord Castlereagh's original view, as already mentioned, was to have directed the whole efforts of the Powers opposed to Russia to preserve Poland from its grasp; and to attain that, and create a central Power capable of withstanding either France or Russia, he was content to have strengthened Prussia by the whole of Saxony. But, however wise that policy might be, with a view to the warding off future dangers, there could be no doubt that it would be attended with extreme hardship to the present King, and went to establish a precedent which might come to be of dangerous application to the lesser states of Germany in after times. The project of entirely transferring Saxony to Prussia excited a great sensation in these lesser states, the sovereigns of which were alike jealous of any considerable increase of the power of Austria or Prussia, and averse to the idea of dethroning and annihilating a reigning Prince in the Confederacy. Bavaria took the lead in this combination, and spoke out resolutely on the necessity of hazarding a war rather than submitting to it. They took the most effectual means of attaining their object, by addressing themselves to the Prince Regent of England, who,

as King of Hanover, was as much interested as themselves in withstanding the proposal. The Prince embraced their views, and the consequence was a change in the instructions of the British Cabinet to Lord Castlereagh. He was now directed to concur to a certain extent with France, Bavaria, and the lesser German Powers, in opposition to the entire absorption of Saxony by Prussia, and to contend for a compromise. To this change the preservation of Dresden and a part of Saxony to its reigning family is mainly to be ascribed.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 495, 496, and 543-550; Cap. i. 92; Hard. xii. 462.

35. Warlike measures of France and Bavaria.

This change, however, by threatening to deprive Prussia of part of the territories of Saxony, which its Cabinet so eagerly coveted, only augmented the chances of a complete rupture between the Powers, and a general war. They immediately took fire at Berlin. Hardenberg declared openly at Vienna, that "Prussia would not restore Saxony. She had won it, and she would keep it. She had neither the inclination nor idea of abandoning it." At the same time, the Prussian armies were all put on the war footing, and large bodies of troops from Berlin marched into Dresden, and occupied all the frontier towns of Saxony. Meanwhile the other Powers were not idle, and Frederick Augustus found himself supported by a larger combination than he could have ventured to hope for. Bavaria had 70,000 men soon on foot, which were moved towards the Saxon frontier, and De Wrede formally offered to Metternich to bring 25,000 into the field for every 100,000 which the Cabinet of Vienna sent forth to support them. Talleyrand wrote to his Government in the most urgent terms, counselling the immediate increase of the French army; and Louis XVIII., though most reluctant to draw the sword, at length agreed to call 70,000 of the old soldiers to their standards, which raised the effective force of France from 130,000 to 200,000 men. So threatening did affairs look, that the Duke of Wellington wrote from Paris that war was inevitable, and that the only use of the Congress of Vienna was to gain time for the preparations

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of France to be rendered complete. He was a true prophet in one sense, and yet matters turned out differently in another. War did break out, and he was engaged in it; but it was not against the Prussians, but the French; and the troops which he combated at Waterloo were those then put on the war footing to resist the dreaded encroachments of the northern Powers.[1]*

[1] Hard. xii. 462; Thiers, xviii. 496, 497.

36. The Emperor of Russia in some degree modifies his views on Poland and Saxony.

Notwithstanding all his determination to hold by Poland for himself, and secure Saxony for Prussia, the Czar was somewhat moved by the threatened combination of Austria, Bavaria, and France, against Russia and Prussia, the more especially as, from the declared hostility of Lord Castlereagh to the Polish project, and the *entire* spoliation of the King of Saxony, it was more than doubtful what part Great Britain might take in such an emergency. Prince Hardenberg, who entirely shared these apprehensions, accordingly prevailed on the Emperor to issue a declaration to the effect that in "re-establishing Poland under the Russian sceptre he had originally intended to have incorporated the towns of Thorn and Cracow with his empire, but that, in deference to the fears expressed in Germany at such a measure, he had agreed to renounce it, on condition that those two towns should enjoy the same independence as the Hanse towns under the protection of the Allies; and on the further condition that Prussia should obtain Saxony entire, and that Mayence should become a fortress of the German confederacy." To give additional currency to this declaration, Hardenberg agreed that the fortifications of *Thorn and of Dantzic* should be destroyed, and the constitution of the new kingdom of Poland established on a solid foundation. Under these restrictions he contended that the acquisition of the whole of Saxony by Prussia would

* "Since I closed my letter to you of this morning, I have seen a person who has seen a letter from La Bernardière to one of his friends, in which La Bernardière states his opinion, that all that can be done at Vienna is to keep the ministers now at Congress assembled and in discussion a sufficient length of time to enable France *to prepare for the war which must be the result of the Congress.*"—DUKE OF WELLINGTON *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *September* 27, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 137.

not be a greater accession of territory than Holland was receiving by the annexation of Belgium; Austria by Lombardy and the Tyrol; and Russia by the Grand-duchy of Warsaw. As to the King of Saxony, he proposed to give him a compensation by the principalities of Munster and Paderborn, where the dispossessed monarch might reign with the title of King.* These proposals were submitted to Metternich on the 8th December, and he announced Dec. 8. on the 10th, that the annexation of the whole of Saxony Dec. 10. to Prussia was inconsistent with the principles of his Government; that it compromised its Bohemian frontier, and might give rise to dangerous intrigues on the part of France; that the losses of Prussia were adequately compensated by a portion of the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, Lower Lusatia, the district of Wittenberg, and some others, without their being withdrawn from the German Confederacy. To this answer, Bavaria, Wirtemberg, Hanover, and all the lesser states of Germany acceded by a solemn act, fraught to all appearance with the gravest consequences; for Prussia, supported by Russia, persisted in the demand for the whole of Saxony, and England and France were cordially ranged on the side of Austria in the dispute.[1]

[1] Metternich to Hardenberg, Dec. 10, 1814; Hard. xii. 464, 465; Thiers, xviii. 503-507.

37. Stormy interview of Alexander and Talleyrand.

Previous to this, in the end of October, just before the formal opening of the Congress, on finding matters becoming very serious, the Emperor Alexander had requested, and immediately obtained, a second interview with M. de Talleyrand. He was much more courteous and gracious on this than on the former occasion, "I found you at Paris," said the Czar, "entirely in favour

* Hardenberg's proposal for the King of Saxony was:—"De lui céder les principautés de Munster et de Paderborn où Frederic Auguste regnerait avec le titre de Roi, qui, après lui, serait remplacé par celui de Grand-duc pour faire disparaître toute inquiétude de la part d'Autriche. Le Roi de Prusse engagerait à ne point fortifier Dresde et à céder à sa Majesté Imperiale le district de Ratibor dans la Haute Silesie, presque tous ceux de Pled et de Leobschutz, ainsi qu'un canton de la principauté de Neiss. Quant à Mayence, la Bavière ayant été trop richement pourvue par Anspach et Bayreuth (sacrifices qui coutait tant de regrets à la Prusse) pour oser prétendre à la possession de cette ville il entrait dans les vues de l'Empereur Alexandre de l'assigner au Grand-duc de Hesse-Darmstadt en confiant sa défense aux Alliés."—HARDENBERG, xii. 464, 465.

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of the restoration of Poland." "Assuredly, Sire," replied the diplomatist, "I and all the French would have seen with joy the restoration of Poland; but it is not ancient Poland which we would see rise from its ashes. That of which there is now a question is a very different thing, and one in which we have only a remote and inconsiderable interest. It is for the German Princes to say whether they wish to see Russia brought down to the Oder. We, as defenders of the public rights of Europe, are only concerned in securing the preservation of Saxony." At these words the Emperor lost all command of himself. "Public rights, indeed! vain words; words which every one makes use of to serve his own convenience. I am not to be deceived by them. There is no junction here either of principles or rights, but of interest, which every one understands after his own fashion. I have promised Saxony to Frederick William, and I shall keep my word. I hold more by it than by those pretended treaties, which are only a cover for lies. The King of Saxony is a traitor, who has deserted the cause of Europe. If he was served right, he would go to expiate his offence in Russia. He would not be the first Saxon prince who has in that manner expiated his pretensions to Poland." "The word traitor," replied Talleyrand, "is one which can never be applied to a sovereign who can only be in the condition of a conquered party, and should never find a place in a mouth so august as that of your Majesty. Public right is a real, sacred thing, which constitutes the great distinction between civilised and barbarous nations; and I trust your Majesty will reflect seriously before you outrage the unanimous feelings of Europe." "As to that," answered Alexander, "Austria and England have abandoned Saxony, and my friend Frederick William will be King of Prussia and Saxony, as I myself Emperor of Russia and King of Poland." "I doubt it," replied Talleyrand; "nothing is less certain than the consent of England and Austria

to such an arrangement." "To cut the matter short," answered Alexander, "you have elsewhere interests which you have much at heart.* My acquiescence in the wishes of France will depend on her acquiescence in mine." "France," rejoined Talleyrand, "has no favour to ask. She appeals only to principles." They parted mutually irritated, and having made no advance towards a better understanding.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 511-513.

38. And with M. de Metternich.

Finding France thus resolute, Alexander had recourse to Austria, and requested an interview with M. de Metternich, who immediately waited upon him. The Prussian minister had previously communicated the answer of M. de Metternich to the last proposals of the Cabinet of Berlin, which revealed a desire to isolate Russia by means of concessions which should appease Prussia. Alexander commenced the conference by his usual remarks on the iniquity of the partition of Poland, and the necessity of making a shining reparation, which Russia alone could do by reason of the extent of its Polish possessions. "Austria," replied Metternich, "has already in her possession a considerable part of the old Polish territory; and she would as willingly as any other Power undertake a restoration which is to cost so little to the repairing Power." At these words the Czar became violently irritated. "The remark," said he, "is false and improper; and you are probably the only man in Austria who would venture to address Russia in such terms of *revolt*." "If such are to be the terms on which the Cabinets are hereafter to be," replied Metternich, "I have only to request the Emperor, my master, to send another representative of Austria to the Congress." The conference then broke up, with even warmer feelings of mutual exasperation than the one with Talleyrand had done.[2]

[2] Thiers, xviii. 512, 513.

When such were the terms on which the leading characters at the Congress were conversing, it was obviously only a question of time, and that too a very short one,

* Alluding to Murat and Napoleon.

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39. Progress of the two Emperors in Hungary, and formal opening of the Congress.

when it was to be dissolved, and a bloody war was to break out between the once Allied Powers. The account of this stormy interview was soon bruited abroad in Vienna, and produced an immense sensation. "What have we gained," it was said, "by having emancipated ourselves from the yoke of Napoleon, if it was only to fall under another not less imperious and oppressive, and not relieved, like the former, by the prodigious ascendant which genius had acquired in the last domination? On the day following the two Emperors set out on a visit to Ofen (Buda) in Hungary, during which Francis, who was the host on the occasion, lavished the most delicate attentions on the Czar. But it was all in vain; the estrangement was irreconcilable and visible. Interests too vital were at stake to be reconciled by the most studied courtesy of manner. The Czar gave token of the impending danger, and of his secret designs, by lavishing the most flattering attentions on the Hungarian and Greek chiefs whom he met during his progress through Hungary—attentions which too clearly bespoke the design of coercing Austria by the threat of erecting a Greco-Sclavonic empire on its ruins. Meanwhile, at Vienna, the Congress had formally met for the transaction of business on the 1st November. Though assembled and busily negotiating ever since the 25th September, it was then only that it was in name constituted. Its first act was to nominate committees to draw up reports for the final decision, on all important questions, of the eight Powers' signatories of the treaty of Paris, who composed it. These were—for the general affairs of Northern Europe, the representatives of Russia, Prussia, Austria, England, and France; for those of Italy—Russia, Austria, England, France, and Spain; for Germany—Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Wirtemberg, and Hanover; for Poland—Austria, Russia, and Prussia, under the mediation of England; for Switzerland—Russia, Austria, England, and France;[1] for the navigation of the Rhine—Prussia, Austria, England,

1 Thiers, xviii. 514-520; Congrès de Vienne, i. 248-252.

and France; and for the consideration of the slave trade —the maritime Powers.

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During all this time Lord Castlereagh was indefatigable in his endeavours to detach Prussia from Russia, and unite it with all the other States of Germany in a defensive league to resist the encroachments of the Czar on the side of Poland. Upon the King he could produce no impression, for he was a fellow-soldier of Alexander, and like him he felt himself bound by every consideration of gratitude and honour to his benefactor. But upon the Prussian Cabinet, which was not bound by the same irrefragable bonds, and which was second to none in Europe in ability and intelligence, his efforts were attended with much greater success; and both Metternich and Talleyrand now embraced his views and seconded his efforts. He represented to them "that the abandonment of Poland was a misfortune for the whole of Germany, but for the Prussians in particular, so near Russia, a peril of the gravest kind: that even the last partition was less dangerous, for it at least left the Vistula with its fortresses as a barrier against Russia; but that it was now proposed to bring them across that river down to the Oder, and into the very heart of Germany: that the project of restoring Poland was a mere delusion; for the Poland which would be restored would not be the ancient warlike and independent republic, but a vanquished and submissive Poland, which could prove nothing in the hands of the Czar but a brave nation of slaves fighting for its masters: that if it were permitted to have any will of its own it could only be to resume Gallicia from Austria, and Dantzic, Graudentz, and Thorn from Prussia; and it might be figured what interest the Cabinet of Berlin would have in facilitating such a consummation. The motive which led the great Frederick to accept a portion of Poland on occasion of the first partition in 1772, was to unite by them old Prussia to Silesia, which otherwise would have been completely separated, and

40. Lord Castlereagh succeeds in shaking the Prussian Cabinet.

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would have presented the two sides of a right angle united only at its apex. But this advantage would be entirely lost, and the old inconvenience would return in a still more dangerous form, if this portion of the Polish territory were ceded to Russia, and that Power established on the Netze and the Wartha, between Thorn, Posen, and Kalisch. Russia would then only require a single step to cut Prussia in two by a single stroke, and send one army to Berlin and old Prussia and another to Upper Silesia. All that Prussia would acquire on the Elbe from Wittenberg to Dresden could never compensate to her the extreme risk of having the Russians permanently established at Posen, in the very midst of her territories. Her demands for an increase of dominion on the Elbe are universally acknowledged. England, and even Austria, are willing to give her the whole, or at least the greater part, of Saxony, but on the condition that she will frankly and in good faith join the European alliance, and detach herself from the ambitious ally to whom she is unhappily so strongly united. That attachment, however, is not founded upon reasons of State and public policy, but has arisen entirely from the friendship and gratitude of the King for the Czar. The destiny of nations, however, should not be made to depend on the friendship of individuals; and it is the duty of the Prussian ministers to enlighten their sovereign upon the real interests of his people, and if they cannot persuade him to alter his policy, to withdraw from his service."[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 532, 533.

41. Effect it produced on the King of Prussia.

These arguments of Lord Castlereagh were so obviously well founded, and they spoke so strongly on military grounds to the desire for national independence, naturally strong in a state which felt itself surrounded by more powerful neighbours, that they produced a strong impression even on Frederick William, and caused him to hesitate in throwing himself, as he had hitherto done, into the arms of Russia. The Prussian ministers, indeed, were too far-sighted not to have themselves adopted the same views;

and it was the influence of the King, arising from his personal regard for the Emperor of Russia, which had hitherto prevented effect being given to them.* The Emperor of Russia soon perceived this change, and as all the other Powers were decidedly against him on this point, he was very much affected by it. To neutralise the impression, he asked the King of Prussia to dine with him, *tête-à-tête*, in order to come to an understanding on the momentous questions at issue, without the intervention of their ministers—a proceeding which, how unusual soever in matters of State, seemed warranted by the dangers they had faced together and the personal intimacy which subsisted between them. The interview was looked forward to with the utmost anxiety by the Czar, for he well knew how set his subjects were on gaining the command of their ancient and hereditary enemies, the Poles; and he himself said to Sir Charles Stewart that "it was as much as his crown was worth to return empty-handed to St Petersburg." It took place on the 29th November, and was attended with unlooked-for success.[1]

Nov. 29.

[1] Thiers, xviii. 533, 534; Lond. 362; Sir C. Stewart to Lord Liverpool, Dec. 2, 1814, MS.

42. Interview of the Czar with the King of Prussia.

Alexander, who was extremely excited on this occasion, spoke with the last degree of violence. He began by recalling to their recollection the vows they had interchanged in the beginning of 1813 when they met on the Oder, and after years of severance and coldness promised to stand or fall together, or save Europe by their united efforts. He reminded him of the fidelity to his oath which he had evinced, when, his councillors having all advised him to halt on the Vistula and make peace with Napoleon, he had resolved to brave all the dangers of war rather than forego the chance of delivering Germany. "But," said he, "for this honourable fidelity to engagements, Germany would still have been enslaved, and Prussia reduced to five millions of inhabitants. It is to the fidelity of

* "I consider the Polish question as settled. *Prussia never contended it in earnest*, and Austria consequently has yielded. The Saxon question is now the only one that is of much difficulty."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* DUKE OF WELLINGTON, *December* 17, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 219.

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Russia that this change, so fortunate to both, which has since taken place, is entirely to be ascribed. The coalesced Powers are all desirous to profit by this auspicious change of fortune themselves, but they would deprive the Russians, to whom they are indebted for it all, of any share in the remuneration. To leave Russia bounded on the side of Europe by the Vistula is to leave her without any compensation for all the blood she has shed from the banks of the Oder to those of the Seine. After the disaster of Moscow Napoleon offered us peace with the Vistula for a boundary, and we might have returned home with security and honour without exposing ourselves to fresh hazards, or sacrificing the 200,000 soldiers who were lost in Germany in 1813. Now, however, this grand resolution, to which the deliverance of Europe has been owing, to pass the Vistula despite the advice of the wise Kutusoff, is forgotten, and those very Powers, who could only be impelled by violent pressure to hazard anything in the cause, will enjoy the whole fruits of victory. The Austrians, in particular, who have not shed a fourth of the blood poured forth like water during the war, appropriate to themselves the whole gains of conquest, and will not leave Russia a village to compensate to her for Moscow burned. That diplomatists should enter into such cold-blooded calculations can be understood—it is their business to do so; but that sovereigns full of the sentiments of honour, like Alexander and Frederick William, of the same age, and bound together by the perils they have shared in common, by the vicissitudes of their lives, by their common reverses, their common triumphs, should give way to the same selfish views, is inconceivable. We have been always happy and fortunate when we were friends, and never unfortunate except when disunited; we both feel a superstition concerning our union: let us remain for ever united for our own happiness and the good of our people."[1]*

[1] Thiers, xviii. 535, 536.

* The particulars of this interesting meeting were communicated the next day to Hardenberg, who forthwith sent them to Talleyrand and Lord Castle-

There was much truth in these eloquent words, so far as the personal merits of Alexander, and the great services of Russia during the war, were concerned; though, unfortunately, so far as the independence of Europe and the liberties of other States were involved, they were met by other considerations not less weighty, and of more general application. Enforced, however, with the charm of manner which the Czar possessed in so high a degree, and to which his animation and vehemence only lent additional force, they proved irresistible. Frederick William threw himself into the Emperor's arms, and they mutually swore again eternal friendship. Alexander, however, when the first transports were over, reminded Frederick William that it was not enough that they were united, but that the consent of their Cabinets was required to public acts, which should bind their respective Governments. For this purpose another meeting was arranged between the Emperor and Prince Hardenberg, at which the former repeated all the arguments he had addressed to Lord Castlereagh and Prince Talleyrand to induce him to adopt his views. Hardenberg combated them as much as he could, and laid before him the views of Austria and Great Britain on the subject, but without producing the smallest impression on the Czar. The minister was finally obliged to yield; Russia and Prussia remained more closely united than ever; and the conditions of the agreement were, the abandonment to Russia of the whole of the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, including Warsaw, with 4,200,000 inhabitants, and the annexation to Prussia of the whole of Saxony.[1]

43. Fresh and secure union of Russia and Prussia.

[1] Thiers, xviii. 536, 537, 541.

This renewed cordial understanding between Alexander and Frederick William soon made itself felt in many different ways. The Czar and his suite discontinued all visits, except those of mere ceremony, to the French Embassy, and openly received in the most cordial manner

44. Extreme alienation of Alexander against the Bourbons.

reagh, by whom they were transmitted to Paris and London, where M. Thiers found them in the *Bureau des Affaires Etrangères*.—THIERS, xviii. 536-542.

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those who were known to be most obnoxious to them. Eugene Beauharnais had recently arrived at Vienna; he was immediately met in the most flattering manner by the Emperor, who not only visited him with almost paternal kindness, but publicly walked with him arm-in-arm on terms of the most intimate familiarity. He spoke constantly of the necessity of keeping faith, and executing with the most scrupulous fidelity the treaty with Murat; and when Talleyrand alluded to the obvious danger of leaving Buonaparte so near the coast of Italy, and hinted on the necessity of removing him to St Helena or the Canary Islands, he replied, "Right or wrong, I have signed the treaty of Fontainebleau, and I will abide by it. When my word is once given I do not admit of change. So much the worse for France if she does not keep her engagements." So far did the Emperor's irritation against the royal family at Paris go, that he spoke to his confidential friends on the possibility of substituting for them on the throne of France the younger branch of the Bourbons. The name of the Duke of Orleans was mentioned as a suitable person for the throne along with those of Bernadotte, who was again viewed in a favourable light, and Prince Eugene; and so far did these speculations go, that, in a memoir secretly prepared by orders of the Emperor, and which came afterwards into the possession of the Duc de Richelieu, the question was seriously argued whether the continuance of the elder branch on the throne of France afforded any security for the independence of Europe or the repose of France.[1]*

[1] Cap. i. 88, 89.

* The Saxon question had been thus ably stated by the French Government:—

"La question sur le sort de Saxe et de son souverain peut être envisagée sous le double rapport du droit et de l'utilité. On parle d'un royaume comme d'un pays vacant, du Roi comme d'un criminel qui n'a plus rien à attendre, si ce n'est peut-être de la clemence.

"Le Roi n'a point abdiqué; si donc il a perdu ses droits, il faut nécessairement de deux choses l'une; ou que la conquête seule ait pu les lui faire perdre, ou qu'un jugement l'en ait privé. Quand l'oppresseur de l'Europe disposa du Hanovre, qu'il avait conquis, loin de reconnaître qu'il avait pu en disposer, l'Angleterre déclara la guerre à la Puissances qui avait consenti à le recevoir de lui (la Prusse). Quand par représailles celle-ci donna la Guadeloupe à la

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Seeing matters so nearly approaching a rupture, and rightly judging that the principal danger to be guarded against in any ulterior arrangements was the augmentation of the already exorbitant power of Russia, Lord Castlereagh lost no time in drawing closer his relations with Prince Metternich and Prince Talleyrand. Knowing from the decided language of the Emperor and his public acts, as evinced in the vast concentration of troops in Poland, that he would not be diverted from his designs, and, if necessary, would carry them through by force, these three statesmen considered seriously during the first week of December what measures were best calculated to defeat them. The result of these deliberations was the forwarding of a decided note by Prince Metternich to the Emperor Alexander, in which it was stated that, "Considering the unanimous opinion of Germany, the definitive

45. Decided note of Austria.

Dec. 10.

Suède le même oppresseur de l'Europe réprouva à son tour la doctrine, que la conquête seule peut oter la souveraineté. L'Angleterre et son ennemi ont donc également rejeté cette doctrine : la conquête n'a donc pas pu rendre le royaume de Saxe vacant.

"Le Roi de Saxe n'a certainement pas été jugé, car il n'a été ni cité ni entendu. Il est donc tout au plus dans le simple état d'accusé; c'est à dire, dans un état où celui qui s'y trouve ne perd même le droit d'être tenu pour innocent jusqu'à ce qu'il ait été condamné. Si le Roi de Saxe devait être jugé, par qui serait-il? Serait ce par ses accusateurs? Serait ce par ceux qui veulent profiter de ses depouillés? Serait ce par ceux dont la politique a seule créé cette necessité, qui l'absout de toutes les fautes qu'elle aurait pu lui faire commettre.

"Admittons pour un moment qu'il puisse l'être et qu'il soit; d'après quel principe de justice la peine portée contre lui serait-elle étendue aux princes de sa ligne? La confiscation, que les nations eclaircis ont banni de leurs codes, serait celle introduite aux dix-neuvième siècle dans le droit général de l'Europe; ou la confiscation d'un royaume serait-elle moins odieuse que celle d'un simple chaumière? Agir comme si la conquête seule donnait la souveraineté c'est anéantir le droit de l'Europe et la placer sous l'empire exclusif de l'arbitraire et de la force. A qui la disposition que l'on pretend faire de la Saxe serait-elle utile? A la Prusse? Deux millions de sujets qui d'ici a plus d'un siècle peut-être ne s'affectioneraient point à la dynastie nouvelle. Ou veut fortifier la Prusse; on l'aura réelement affoibli. L'union de l'Autriche et de la Prusse est nécessaire au repos et à la sûreté de l'Allemagne; mais la disposition qu'on pretend de faire de la Saxe serait la chose du monde la plus propre à rallumer une rivalité qui a duré jusqu'aux désastres de la Prusse et que ses désastres ont suspendue mais non pas peut-être eteinté. Ainsi ces dispositions iraient contre le but même qui les aurait fait faire, et d'un premier mal naîtroient une foule de maux. Reconnoissons donc que l'injustice est un mauvais fondement, sur lequel le monde politique ne sauraient bâtir que pour sa ruine."—*Protestation de la France*, 2 *Novembre* 1814; *Congrès de Vienne*, i. 276-280.

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resolution of England, as expressed in the last instructions to Lord Castlereagh, and the opinion of all the great European Powers, and in particular that of France, and keeping in view the non-implement by Prussia of the conditions imposed in a moment when her desires were yielded to, Austria was now resolved that Saxony should be maintained in its existing state, with the exception of some sacrifices of territory judged necessary for the better rounding of the Prussian territory, and which may be regarded as the just punishment of the faults committed by Frederick Augustus."[1] *

[1] Note by Metternich, Dec. 10, 1814; Cast. Cor. MS.; and Thiers, xviii. 553.

46. Warlike preparations of Austria, France, and Bavaria.

It was not without a full appreciation of the dangers with which it was attended that this decided step, so different from his usual policy, was taken by Prince Metternich. The ministers of the three coalesced Powers had concerted measures, and were prepared for any eventuality. Austria had 250,000 men in arms in Moravia and Bohemia, and the allied armies of Bavaria, Wirtemberg, Baden, and Saxony raised the entire force to 320,000 men, ready for action in Central Germany. This immense force was to be divided into two armies—one, 200,000 strong, was to advance from Moravia towards the Upper Vistula, while the second, consisting of 120,000 combatants, was to march from Bohemia on the Oder. At the same time a force of 50,000 French was to enter Franconia, so as to cover the flank of the army moving on the Oder, and 50,000 more French to enter the Prussian-Rhenish provinces. By the concentration of these formidable masses, it was hoped Prussia would be com-

* This note of Metternich's bore:—"L'Autriche ne nourrit aucune jalousie contre la Prusse: elle regarde, au contraire, cette puissance comme l'un des poids les plus utiles dans la balance des forces de l'Europe. De toutes ces puissances c'est celle dont la position a le plus de conformité avec celle d'Autriche. Placé également entre les grands empires de l'ouest et de l'est, la Prusse et l'Autriche completent leur système de défense respective. *Unies, les deux monarchies forment une barrière impregnable* contre les entreprises de tout prince conquerant qui, de nouveau *occuperait peut-être un jour le trône de France ou celui de Russie.*"—*Note du* PRINCE METTERNICH, 10 *Decembre* 1814; CAPEFIGUE, i. 80, *from* METTERNICH'S *Papers.*

pelled to abandon her pretensions to the whole of Saxony, and Russia be driven beyond the Vistula. The projects of the coalesced Powers were not to be carried into execution till March following, and in the mean time they remained the close secret of Austria, England, France, and Bavaria. England, as the best part of her army was engaged in America, was not taken bound to furnish any troops in the first instance, but she was to make up the deficiency in subsidies to the other Powers, of which some of them, and France in particular, stood much in need.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 552, 553; Cap. i. 94, 95.

47. The Czar begins to yield. Dec. 31.

Prussia did not reply to the determined note of Austria till the 20th, when Prince Hardenberg lodged a note, reiterating the demand of his Court for the whole of Saxony as the only adequate recompense which the nation could receive for the sacrifices she had made; but offering to give up certain of her possessions on the left bank of the Rhine, as an indemnity to Frederick Augustus. On the preceding day, Talleyrand had drawn up a note, which was communicated to Lord Castlereagh on the 24th, in which he stated that he abandoned with regret the cause of Poland, which he could no longer defend against Russia, but that he would support that of Saxony, in the preservation of which the two principles of legitimacy and equilibrium of power were interested. The Czar now somewhat abated his haughty pretensions in regard to Poland. Some rumours of the combination of France, Austria, and England had reached his ears, and the constant communication between the embassies of those three Powers sufficiently proved that something serious was in contemplation. Accordingly, by a note on 31st December, he consented to relinquish one part of the Polish territory to Austria and another to Prussia, to declare Cracow a free city, and to give the restored kingdom of Poland, which might embrace the whole of that country ceded in the three partitions to Russia, such a constitution as might suit the wishes of the inhabitants and be in conformity with

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the lights of the age. But the two Courts of Berlin and Vienna repudiated this proposal, from the apprehension that if so large a portion of Poland were assigned to Russia, the two lesser portions would ere long follow the same direction.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 466, 467.

48. Secret treaty between England, France, and Austria. Jan. 3, 1815.

As there was now no prospect of an accommodation, and it had become evident that force alone, or the immediate prospect of its application, could lead to a solution of the difficulty, the representatives of the three Powers, Austria, France, and Great Britain, at the suggestion of Lord Castlereagh, on 3d January 1815, signed a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, which was the most important diplomatic act of the Congress of Vienna, and portended new political combinations, which have, more or less, ever since governed the diplomacy of Europe. By this treaty, which proceeded on the preamble of the decree of the contracting parties to act in the most disinterested way, so as to carry out the principles of the treaty of Paris,* it was provided that if any one was

Art. 1.

* "Le Prince de Hardenberg ayant dit avec chaleur dans le comité de Pologne et Saxe que la Prusse saurait bien défendre ses droits sur la Saxe, Lord Castlereagh, piqué, se détermina aussitôt à proposer aux plénipotentiaires de France et d'Autriche une alliance defensive entre les trois cours: elle fut signée le 3 Janvier 1815."—CAPEFIGUE, i. 95.

The preamble of the treaty bore:—"Leurs Majestés l'Empereur d'Autriche, le Roi de France, et le Roi du Royaume de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande, convaincus que les puissances qui avaient à completer les dispositions du traité de Paris devaient être maintenues dans un état de sécurité et d'indépendance parfaite pour pouvoir fidèlement et dignement s'acquitter d'un si important devoir, regardent en conséquence comme nécessaire à cause des pretentions récemment manifestées de pouvoir aux moyens de repousser toute agression à laquelle leurs propres possessions ou celles de l'un deux pourraient se trouver exposées en haine des propositions qu'ils auràient cru de leur devoir de faire et de soutenir d'un commun accord par principe de justice et d'equité, et n'ayant pas moins à cœur *de completer les dispositions du traité de Paris*, de la manière la plus conforme qu'il serait possible à son veritable sens et esprit, à ses fins ont resolu de faire entrer entr'eux une convention solennelle, et de conclure une alliance défensive. En conséquence, les trois souverains sur-nommés designaient pour leurs plénipotentiaires respectifs le Prince de Metternich, le Prince de Talleyrand, et Lord Castlereagh. Les hautes puissances contractantes s'engagent réciproquement et chacune d'elles envers les autres, à agir de concert avec le plus parfait désintéressement et la plus complete bonne foi pour faire qu'en exécution du traité de Paris, les arrangemens qui devaient en completer les dispositions fussent effectués de la manière la plus conforme qu'il serait

attacked they should regard themselves as all assailed; that if one of the three found itself menaced, the two others should intervene, and, in case of failure to effect an amicable adjustment, should succour it, each with an armed force of 150,000 men, of which 120,000 should be infantry and 30,000 cavalry; that his Britannic Majesty should have the option of furnishing the whole or part of his contingent in foreign troops taken into his pay; that in the event of a war, they should concur amicably on the appointment of a general-in-chief, and the operations to be carried on; that in the event of new arrangements or additional contributions of armed forces becoming necessary, they should be entered into and provided without delay; that peace should not be made but by common consent; that this treaty was not to be regarded as annulling any previous one between the same parties, but, on the contrary, as ratifying and confirming them in their fullest extent.[1] The preparations of the new Allies kept pace with their engagements. Everywhere warlike preparations were set on foot, and as a preliminary step 25,000 fresh Austrian troops marched into Gallicia. On their side Russia and Prussia were not idle. The Russians had already concentrated 260,000 men in Poland; Prussia had 173,000 under arms; Austria, 220,000 effectives; and the Anglo-Belgian army was reckoned at 80,000. By a secret article, Bavaria, Hanover, Holland, and Piedmont were invited to accede to the treaty, which they immediately did, and added 100,000 more to the Allied forces. Thus, as the result of a pacific congress, and in the midst of professions of moderation and pacific dispositions on all sides, all Europe was in arms, and on the verge of a universal conflagration,[2] and a million of armed

Art. 2. Art. 3. Art. 4. Art. 5. Art. 6. Art. 7. Art. 8.

[1] Traité, Jan. 3, 1815; Cap. i. 95, 96.

[2] Cap. i. 97

possible au veritable esprit de ce traité; que si, par suite et en haine des propositions qu'elles auraient faites et soutenues d'un commun accord, leurs possessions étaient attaqués, alors et dans ce cas elles s'engageaient pour se tenir pour attaquées tous trois à faire cause commune entre elles et à s'assister mutuellement pour repousser une telle agression avec toutes les forces déjà spécifiés."—*Traité*, 3 *Janvier* 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence, MS.*; and CAPEFIGUE, i. 96.

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men on the two sides only waited a signal from Vienna to commence the work of mutual destruction.*

49. Origin of the contest with America at this time.

The weighty concerns connected with European diplomacy at this period were not the only ones which occupied the attention, and called for the direction of Lord Castlereagh. A negotiation, hardly inferior in its ultimate effects in importance, was at the same time pending with the United States of America. To understand how this came about, it must be premised that at the close of the war on the Continent, the Americans had, for no apparent reason, and at a very suspicious time, declared war against Britain. There was really, at the time when these hostilities were commenced, no cause in dispute between the two Powers. At a previous period of the contest, indeed, when the English and French, each engaged in mortal hostility, were interchanging deadly thrusts at each other, the inhabitants of the United States had just ground of complaint against both the belligerents; for the French had declared all neutral vessels with their cargoes good prize which *had* touched at any harbour in Great Britain, and the English did the same with any neutral vessel bound for a French harbour, which had *not* touched at an English port. But this cause of complaint, how just and pressing soever, had passed away. The English Orders in Council, which, with the Berlin and Milan Decrees, had made this violent invasion on neutral rights, had been repealed, so that, on this ground at least, there was no longer any reasonable cause for complaint. But in the course of the negotiations which had long pended on the subject, it had become evident

| | | Allies. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| * Russians, . | 260,000 | Austrians, . . . . | 220,000 |
| Prussians, . | 175,000 | French, . . . . . | 100,000 |
| | | Anglo-Belgians, . . . | 80,000 |
| | | Bavaria, Hanover, and Wirtemberg, | 75,000 |
| | | Piedmont, . . . . | 60,000 |
| | 435,000 | | 535,000 |

—*Note of* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *January* 5, 1815; *MS.*

that the Orders in Council, though the ostensible, were not the real cause of the war. The Americans made no corresponding complaints against the French decrees, though they had commenced this unwonted, and, to neutrals, destructive species of warfare. All their indignation was directed against the British, though their measures, how violent soever, were in retaliation and defence only, and it continued after they were repealed. It was apparent that the Americans, deeming the British armies and fleets deeply engaged in the European war, deemed the opportunity favourable for throwing their sword into the scale when it was so nearly balanced, and extorting from the distresses of Great Britain a renunciation of the right of searching neutral vessels at sea, and wresting from her her remaining transatlantic possessions. And thus the unseemly spectacle was exhibited of an emancipated colony seeking to aggrandise itself at the expense, in a moment of distress, of the mother-country, and of the greatest republic of the New World combining with the despot of the Old, to root out the last asylum of freedom on the European shores.

50. Balanced success during the war with America.

The success in the war had been so equally balanced that though on the whole it had been decisively on the side of Great Britain, yet either party might withdraw with honour from the contest. On the one hand, the Americans could point with pride to the spectacle of three British frigates taken in single combat by so many of theirs of equal nominal rating, though much superior in real strength; a formidable attack on New Orleans had been repulsed with great slaughter; and the British squadron on Lake Champlain annihilated by the vessels of the United States. On the other hand, the British had redeemed, in two glorious encounters at sea, the dimmed lustre of their arms; they had taken Washington, the capital of the United States; repulsed all attempts to invade Canada; and so utterly ruined the commerce of the confederated states that the custom duties,

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the chief source of the public revenue of the confederacy, had almost entirely disappeared. In these circumstances, and as the liberation of the British army from France by the treaty of 1814 enabled the whole disposable force of the empire to be directed to the American shores, it was clear that all hopes of Canadian conquest were at an end, and that the United States could expect nothing from a continuance of the contest, but the total ruin of their commerce, without any possible success at land to counterbalance these disadvantages. A conviction of these painful truths at length forced itself on the minds of the Americans, and with such force that it is now known that, if the contest had continued six months longer, the whole northern states would have broken off from the union, formed an independent confederacy, and made peace with Great Britain. As England had neither territory nor indemnities to demand from the United States, and her inhabitants were satiated with glory and anxious only for peace, the inclination to come to an accommodation was equally strong on her part. These feelings on both sides led to an interchange of pacific communications, which ended in the appointment of commissioners, who were to meet at Ghent, in the Low Countries, to arrange the terms of a final pacification.

51. Lord Castlereagh's instructions to the British commissioners at Ghent.

Lord Castlereagh's instructions to the British commissioners—who were Lord Gambier, Henry Goulburn, Esq., and Dr Adams—were of the most conciliatory description, and revealed the anxious desire for the adjustment of all disputes between the parties on the most equitable footing.*

* "You may assure the American commissioners that the British Government, whatever sense it may entertain of the causes of the rupture, is sincerely desirous of a permanent adjustment of all differences, and that this desire is not abated by the successful termination of the war in Europe. With this view you are authorised to meet with frankness and conciliation whatever propositions the American negotiators may be prepared to offer for terminating the war which has been declared by their Government.

"So far as the Prince Regent's ministers can anticipate the nature of the approaching discussions, they appear to class themselves under the four following heads:—1st, the questions mainly affecting our maritime rights and strength; and especially the undoubted right of the sovereign of these realms to claim

The commissioners were instructed to adhere firmly to the right claimed by the British to reclaim their own subjects from the merchant vessels of the United States in time of war, and for this purpose to exercise the right of search, but to receive favourably any proposal for the modification in practice of the abstract theory. A revision of the boundary treaty of 1783, which had been very loosely worded, was recommended, not in the spirit of conquest or aggrandise-

and enforce in war the allegiance and service of his subjects; 2dly, the protection which the Indians as allies are entitled to claim at our hands; 3dly, the regulation of the frontier, to prevent hereafter, as far as possible, jealousy or collision; and, 4thly, the question of the Fishery. . . .

1. "With respect to the maritime question, you will endeavour to ascertain whether the American negotiators have any specific measure to propose for obviating hereafter the alleged abuses of which they complain in the practice of impressing British seamen from on board American merchant ships. The enclosed proclamations will demonstrate that the British Government can never recede from the principle of holding their own subjects to their duty of allegiance. You will endeavour to ascertain whether the American Government is disposed prospectively to desist from their extravagant pretensions under this head, in which case something might possibly be devised to relieve their difficulties as to the past, by adopting a reasonable system of indulgence towards individuals who may have actually and *bonâ fide* entered amongst them under the faith of their acts of naturalisation. This might be effected by stipulation, without bringing the question of right to issue on either side.

"The right of search and of withdrawing our seamen from on board American merchant ships can never be given up, even for a time, in exchange for any municipal regulation whatsoever. But if the American negotiators have any regulations to propose tending to check abuse, the British Government will weigh them dispassionately, and with a desire to conciliate. The difficulties, however, of finding a satisfactory expedient may render it desirable to waive this discussion altogether, if other points can be adjusted. To this the British Government will have no objection, considering the question to be practically set at rest by the return of peace. They are equally prepared to leave the rule of war of 1756 to rest upon its own clear and well-established authority. Should the American commissioners abstain from stirring this question, you will remain silent upon it. Should they think fit to advert to it, you will assert the principles upon which the British Government has uniformly maintained the legality as well as the justice of this rule. . . .

2. "Upon the subject of the Indians, you will represent that an adequate arrangement of their interests is considered by your Government as a *sine qua non* of peace; and that they will, under this head, require not only that a full and express recognition of their limits shall take place: you will also throw out the importance of the two States entering into arrangements which may hereafter place their mutual relations with each other, as well as with the several Indian nations, upon a footing of less jealousy and irritation. This may be best effected by a mutual guarantee of the Indian possessions, as they shall be established upon the peace, against encroachment on the part of either State. Much of the disquietude to both Governments, as connected with Indian affairs, has been produced by that regular and progressive system of encroachment,

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ment, but to remove the causes of future dispute. For the rights of the Indians a determined stand was to be made, and the boundaries of their territories distinctly laid down; and the former treaties regarding the right of fishing were to be renewed, so far as deep-sea fishing was concerned, but not in so far as they related to fishing within the British maritime jurisdiction, without some equivalent, either in the form of territory or some other way. On the vexed question of the right of search, which was most likely to occasion embarrassment, the commissioners were recommended, if the Americans would concur in it, to waive the discussion of the question altogether, as having practically ceased to have any importance by the general peace.

which renders the Indians resentful and discontented, and which, by gradually approximating the American and British settlements, gives both States a motive for interference in Indian affairs which would not otherwise exist. . . .

3. "You may open to the American commission that the British Government is desirous of revising the frontier between the two States, not in the spirit of conquest or dominion, but upon principles which they consider to be strictly defensive, and in this point of view conducive to the well-understood interests of both Powers. It has become the more necessary to reconsider the treaty of 1783, which was very hastily and improvidently framed in this respect, from the intention, so publicly and recently avowed in the acts and proclamations issued by the American Government, of annexing by conquest the Canadas to their dominions. This plan becomes the more alarming, as a part only of a more general system of aggrandisement, in the execution of which they have possessed themselves of Louisiana and a part of both the Floridas in the midst of peace, and whilst Spain was bravely contending for her existence.

4. "But the point upon which you must be quite explicit from the outset of the negotiation is, the construction of the treaty of 1783 with relation to the Fisheries. You will observe that the third article of that treaty consists of two distinct branches:—the first, which relates to the open sea fishery, we consider of permanent obligation, being a recognition of the general right which all nations have to frequent and take fish in the high seas. The latter branch is, on the contrary, considered as a mere conventional arrangement between the two States, and as such to have been annulled by the war. This part of the treaty has been found to be productive of so much inconvenience as to determine his Majesty's Government not to renew the provisions of it in their present form. Nor do they feel themselves called upon to concede to the Americans any accommodation within the British sovereignty, except upon the principle of a reasonable equivalent in frontier or otherwise; it being quite clear that by the law of nations the subjects of a foreign state have no right to fish within the *maritime jurisdiction*, much less to land on the coasts belonging to his Britannic Majesty, without an express permission to that effect."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* HIS MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS *to negotiate at Ghent; Foreign Office, July* 28, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 67-71.

Under these instructions, which were very judiciously and ably acted upon by the commissioners on both sides, who met and discussed in a spirit of conciliation, the negotiations at Ghent went on tardily, indeed, but amicably, during the last six months of 1814. The American commissioners at first endeavoured to raise some questions as to the legality of the Orders in Council, and the indemnities claimed for captures made under their authority; but as these demands were firmly resisted, they were soon abandoned; while by tacit mutual consent, the discussion on maritime rights was waived. More serious difficulties were incurred in regard to the boundary line, which had been so vaguely fixed by the treaty of 1783, that it in many particulars required to be made anew; and the right contended for by the Americans to fish in British waters. On the first point, the views of Lord Castlereagh were strictly defensive, and founded on the principle that the lakes should be preserved as a barrier to the British, as the weaker Power in North America. To carry out this principle, the only real security would of course be to give the British a strip of land along the whole southern shore of the lakes; but as this might seem to extend the British possessions to an inconvenient degree to the south, he consented to be satisfied with an obligation on the part of the United States, not to erect fortified ports or harbours within a certain distance of their southern coast.* Considerable difficulty was experienced in get-

52. Progress of the negotiations.

* "Upon the point of frontier, you may state that the views of the British Government are *strictly defensive*. They consider the course of the lakes, from Lake Ontario to Lake Superior, both inclusive, to be the natural military frontier of the British possessions in North America. As the weaker Power on the North American continent, the least capable of acting offensively, and the most exposed to sudden invasion, Great Britain considers itself entitled to claim the use of those lakes as a military barrier. It is quite obvious that a boundary line, equally dividing these waters, with a right in each state to arm both upon the lakes and upon their shores, must be calculated hereafter to create a perpetual contest for naval ascendancy, in peace as well as in war—a species of conflict which is likely to be productive of an extent of expense and jealousy, equally to be deprecated by both Governments. It becomes, therefore, necessary, for the sake of peace, to decide to which Power these waters

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ting the American commissioners to agree to the restrictions on the construction of forts or fortified harbours on their coast of the lakes; but at length, by the mingled sauvity and firmness of Lord Castlereagh and the British commissioners, terms were agreed to, and a treaty was

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signed at Ghent, on terms highly honourable to Great Britain. It provided for a mutual restitution of conquests and acquisitions, with the exception of the islands in Passamaquoddy Bay, as to which the *statu quo* possession was to remain till it was ascertained to which they belonged. Nothing, in conformity with the instructions of Lord Castlereagh, was said on the subject of the right of search, or that of reclaiming British seamen from American vessels, which had been the ostensible ground of quarrel. The important point of the frontier line, between the American state of Maine and the British province of New Brunswick, which was alluded to without being ascertained in the treaty of 1783, was referred to two commissioners, one to be chosen on either side, and, failing their decision, to the final award of a friendly sovereign or state, to be also mutually chosen.*

shall, in a military sense, exclusively belong; and, for the reasons above stated, Great Britain considers that she is entitled to lay claim to them. To give practical operation to this principle, it seems necessary that the Power to whom the lakes shall belong shall have the military command of both shores, to effect which a scope of territory with a suitable frontier is important. The British Government is prepared to assign for deliberation a boundary, in execution of this object; but as this would necessarily extend their possessions to the southward of the lakes, and as territory, as such, is by no means the object they have in view, they will be disposed to leave the sovereignty of the soil undisturbed, and, as incident to it, the free commercial navigation of the lakes, as at present enjoyed by the United States, provided the American Government will stipulate not to preserve or to construct any fortifications upon or within a limited distance of the shores, or maintain or construct any armed vessels upon the lakes in question, or upon the rivers which empty themselves into the same. If this can be regulated, there will then remain for discussion the arrangement of the north-western boundary, between Lake Superior and the Mississippi, and on the side of Lower Canada. . . . With respect to the Indians, you will repeat that their being expressly included in the peace, is considered to be a *sine qua non*; and that with respect to their limits, the British Government is prepared, as the least objectionable arrangement to the United States, to take the treaty of Greenville as the basis."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* GHENT COMMISSIONERS, *Aug.* 14, 1814; *Cast. Cor.* x. 89, 90.

* The clause regarding the line of the Maine, which came to be of importance

The Indians were expressly included in the treaty; and the question of the Fisheries equitably adjusted, by leave to the Americans to fish, and land for curing on the British shores being conceded in consideration of the free navigation of the Mississippi being allowed to British subjects. And a clause was inserted expressing the abhorrence of both the contracting parties of the slave trade, and agreeing to do their utmost to procure its entire abolition. As the war was undertaken by the Americans in order to wrest the Canadas from Great Britain, and extort from her, when struggling for her existence with France, a surrender of her maritime rights, and it was concluded without either of these events having been attained, it was, upon the whole, entirely successful on her part, and the conclusion of the treaty one of the most honourable acts of Lord Castlereagh's administration of foreign affairs.[1]

[1] See Treaty in Martens, Sup. ii. 76, and Ann. Reg. 1815, 352, 353.

The conclusion of the peace with America materially strengthened the hands of Lord Castlereagh at the Con-

in after times, was in these words:—"Whereas neither part of the highlands lying due north from the source of the river St Croix, designated in the former treaty of peace between the two Powers as the north-west angle of Nova Scotia, nor the north-westmost head of the Connecticut river, have yet been ascertained; and whereas that part of the boundary line between the dominions of the two Powers, which extends from the source of the river St Croix, directly north to the above north-west angle of Nova Scotia, thence along the said highlands which divide these rivers that empty themselves into the river St Lawrence from those which fall into the Atlantic Ocean, to the north-westmost head of Connecticut river; thence down along the middle of that river to the 45th degree of north latitude; thence by a line due west on said latitude till it strikes the river Iroquois or Cataraguy, has not yet been surveyed; it is agreed that for these several purposes two commissioners shall be appointed, sworn, and authorised, to examine and decide upon the said claims, according to such evidence as shall be laid before them by His Britannic Majesty and the United States respectively; and in the event of their differing, both parties agree to abide by the decision of such friendly sovereign or state as shall be mutually chosen."—*Annual Register*, 1815, 354; *State Papers*. The commissioners, as was to be expected, differed in opinion, and the King of the Netherlands was chosen umpire, who pronounced an award, fixing the line somewhat different from what either party contended for. The British Government professed their willingness to abide by this award, but the American repudiated it, on the ground that the umpire was only empowered to fix on one of the two lines, but not to chalk out a new line differing from either. This dispute brought the two nations in after times to the very verge of a war.

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53. Concessions of Russia in regard to the Polish question at Vienna.

gress of Vienna, for it liberated 30,000 veteran British soldiers, most of them of Peninsular fame, who would form the nucleus of the Allied army in the Low Countries. He made good use of his increased influence to procure some material abatement of the Russian pretensions on Poland, and the Prussian on Saxony. He was at length successful in both attempts. What pains soever the three Powers who had signed the secret treaty of 3d January had taken to prevent its becoming known, its existence was suspected, and at length revealed to the two Northern Courts, by the imprudence or infidelity of the Bavarian diplomatists. The Emperor Alexander, seeing himself thus seriously opposed, and threatened with the military strength of Austria, Southern Germany, France, and England, felt the necessity of abating materially from the claims on Poland, which he had so much at heart. The most important of his concessions regarded the Grand-duchy of Posen, which he consented to leave nearly entire to Prussia—a change eminently to the advantage of the latter Power, for it prevented the Russian territory coming down to the Oder, and separating Silesia from old Prussia, in a way which would have been utterly fatal to its independence. By the line to which the Czar acceded, Prussia obtained the greater part of the basin of the Wartha, a rich and highly peopled district, including the important city of Thorn. In this way Prussia got back about a million of inhabitants, which had been lost by the treaty of Tilsit, and obtained a tolerable military frontier against Russia. A more difficult task remained in arranging the respective claims of Russia and Austria on the side of Gallicia, the whole of which the Czar coveted for his restored kingdom of Poland. He was obliged, however, to relinquish that pretension, to declare Cracow an independent city, and restore to Austria the important district of Tarnopol, which Napoleon had obliged Austria to cede to the Grand-duchy of Warsaw in 1809, after the battle of Wagram.[1] The feelings

[1] Thiers, xviii. 562, 563; Hard. xii. 469, 470.

of the Czar, however, were soothed by his being left in possession of Warsaw and a considerable territory around it, which in some degree seemed to realise his favourite dream of re-establishing the kingdom of Poland as an appanage of the empire of Russia.

54. Lord Castlereagh's efforts to preserve the nationality and a constitution for Poland.

Lord Castlereagh's efforts were not confined to restraining the ambition of Russia from swallowing up the whole of Poland; he laboured also assiduously, and not without effect, in securing for the inhabitants of the district which Russia did acquire of it a separate existence and constitution, with the Polish laws, uniform, arms, and nationality. This was a very great matter in the estimation of the Poles, for it kept alive their hopes of a revived separate existence, and the reunion of their scattered provinces under the national standard. In this effort he stood alone on the side of the confederated Powers, for France, as already observed, had withdrawn from the struggle about Poland, reserving her whole strength for that regarding Saxony, and Austria was too much wedded to the old system of government to take any interest in new constitutions. He found, however, a powerful and unexpected ally in the Emperor Alexander, who, imbued from early youth with liberal and enlarged views by the influence of his Swiss preceptor, La Harpe, had become enamoured of them by the halo of glory which had encircled his brows since the capture of Paris, and was determined to apply them in his newly erected kingdom.* This was accordingly done; Poland received a

* "The Emperor *seems determined about a Polish kingdom and constitution:* the *projet* given him for the latter I have not yet seen, but shall be enabled to let you know something of it in a few days, through my old Polish friends, many of whom are now here."—LORD WALPOLE *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *St Petersburg, August* 9, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 83.

In the same letter is a very curious statement regarding the Emperor Alexander, which several passages in his subsequent life seem too much to confirm. "The intimacy which has so long subsisted between the Emperor and the celebrated Madame Narychkin is about to be broken off, and she will leave this country for some years. I believe her true reason is the fear of what *she foresees likely to happen, from the great oddness of the Emperor.* This *was suspected in very early age, and medical men now here were brought over on that ac-*

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constitution, and all the elements of freedom in so far as they can be conferred by mere institutions. Whether the country was really prepared to take advantage of them, and, socially speaking, benefited by their adoption, may remain a doubt. But there can be doubt that its material interests were largely favoured by the change; for Poland in 1831, after fifteen years of the new Government, maintained on terms approaching to equality a contest with four millions of inhabitants against Russia with sixty millions.

55. Settlement of the Saxon question.

The arrangement of the Polish question, which was the grand difficulty at the Congress, and the one which Lord Castlereagh was most intent on settling, removed the chief obstacle that stood in the way of an adjustment of that of Saxony. As Prussia now resumed possession of the greater part of the Grand-duchy of Posen, containing two millions of inhabitants, her claims for a large indemnity on the side of Saxony were of course proportionally abated, and the arguments of Austria, France, and Great Britain for a restoration of part at least of his dominions to the dispossessed sovereign of Saxony, were materially strengthened. So early as 17th December, accordingly, Lord Castlereagh wrote to the Duke of Wellington, that he considered the Polish question as settled, and the Saxon question the only one now of much consequence, but that as soon as it was settled all difficulties would be at an end.* Hardenberg, though obliged to abandon his

*count.* Upon her expressing an intention of settling for some time in France, he earnestly begged her not to make acquaintance with any of the royal family, *mais de la fronder autant qu'elle pourroit;* but if the Queen of Holland showed her any attention, to cultivate her acquaintance and that of her friends. She excused her resolution to the Emperor, by remarking the strong feeling of affection manifested by the public for the young Empress upon her leaving St Petersburg; her dread of being at some time the victim of that sentiment; and that by going away she would at least show that she was not the obstacle to a reconciliation, which she advised, between them."—LORD WALPOLE *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *August* 9, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence,* x. 84.

* "I consider the Polish question as settled, Prussia never having contended it in earnest, and Austria consequently has yielded. The Saxon question is now the only one that is of much difficulty. The point of Naples being one of principle, and not of detail, cannot lead to delay. I should think, if the

demand for the whole of Saxony, fought a stout battle for as much of it as he could get, and in the end bent his whole endeavours to obtain Leipsic. Such, however, was the resistance opposed to the demand by Lord Castlereagh and the other confederates, that he was ultimately obliged to content himself with Naumburg, Wittenberg, and Torgau on the Saale, and a territory containing 800,000 inhabitants. The principle of an indemnity having been arranged amongst the sovereigns, it was agreed to refer the details to a committee.[1]

[1] Lord Castlereagh to Lord Liverpool, Dec. 18, 1814, MS.; Hard. xii. 473, 474; Thiers, xviii. 572-574.

56. Difficulty as to who were to be members of the Committee.

But in arriving at this conclusion a serious difficulty occurred, which, when almost within sight of the harbour, had wellnigh made shipwreck of the Congress. Austria had presented to the Congress a statistical table from which she made it appear that Prussia would by this arrangement have gained more than she had lost by the spoliation of Napoleon, and would be raised up to the stipulated amount of 10,000,000 souls.* This was warmly contested by M. de Hardenberg, and it was to escape from the difficulty that Lord Castlereagh proposed to

Prussian possessions were settled, that there would not be much difficulty in the Prince of Orange's arrangements, or in the other territorial questions. The Swiss commission will report this week, and that for the north of Italy is in progress. The Genoese arrangement is completed. The Saxon point is apparently the only one of much difficulty, or that can lead to serious consequences."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to the* DUKE OF WELLINGTON, *December* 17, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 219.

* Austria maintained that the gains and just claims of Prussia since the war began, were as follows:—

| | Souls. |
|---|---|
| 1. Regained in Dantzic, Magdeburg, and Westphalia, | 1,500,000 |
| 2. Reclaimed from the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, | 2,500,000 |
| 3. From Anspach and Bareuth, | 500,000 |
| 4. From Hanover, | 300,000 |
| 5. From Saxe-Weimar, | 50,000 |
| | 4,850,000 |

being somewhat more than she had lost, which was 4,800,000 souls. Now, Russia restored to her 1,000,000 in the Grand-duchy of Posen. She would gain on the left bank of the Rhine, and in the Grand-duchy of Berg, 1,600,000; and she had regained in Dantzic, Magdeburg, and Westphalia, 1,500,000. She maintained, therefore, that good faith with Prussia did not require the sacrifice of more than 750,000 souls on the part of Saxony, which had 2,100,000 inhabitants to restore her to her proper state.—See THIERS, xviii. 570, 574; and *Congrès de Vienne*, vi. 176, 177.

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refer the question of figures to a committee. But the question immediately occurred, Who should be represented in it? Austria insisted that it should consist of the representatives of the *four* Allied Powers only, in pursuance of the stipulation in the treaty of 30th May, that the territories wrested from France should be disposed of by them without the intervention of France. M. de Talleyrand immediately took fire at this, and threatened to leave the Congress within twenty-four hours if a representative of France was not admitted to the committee. This was undoubtedly contrary to the provisions of the treaty of Paris, but "*les quatre*" were not so cordially united now as they had been at that time, and the support of France on the Saxon question was felt to be indispensable. Lord Castlereagh accordingly reassembled the representatives of the old Allies, and represented to them the expedience of reconsidering the matter, and admitting M. de Talleyrand to the committee. This was strongly supported by Metternich, and though opposed by Hardenberg on the part of Prussia, and Nesselrode on that of Russia, finally agreed to by them all. After this, the Prussian question might be considered as settled, the only point remaining for consideration being the boundaries and statistical figures necessary to be determined on, with a view to give Prussia the 800,000 souls required out of Saxony. She struggled hard, but in vain, to have the town of Leipsic included in the ceded districts, but she obtained possession of Magdeburg, Wittenberg, and Torgau, on the line of the Elbe.[1] *

Dec. 31.

[1] Thiers, xviii. 573. 575; Hard. xii. 473, 474.

* M. Thiers gives the following graphic account of the colloquy between Sir Charles Stewart (then Lord Stewart) and Talleyrand on this occasion:—

"Il fut décidé qu'il n'y aurait pas de commissaire Français dans la commission d'évaluation. Lord Castlereagh n'osa pas porter lui-même cette nouvelle à M. de Talleyrand; il en chargea son frère Lord Stewart, ministre d'Angleterre à Berlin, qui se présenta à l'hôtel de l'ambassade avec beaucoup d'excuses et d'explications embarrassées. M. de Talleyrand qui, lorsqu'il s'agissait du rôle de la legation Française à Vienne, n'entendait pas raillerie, demanda sèchement au frère de Lord Castlereagh quels avaient été les opposants à l'admission de la France dans la future commission, et lui dit avec une ironie amère, que c'étaient sans doute les *alliés* qui n'avaient pas voulu

57. Difficulties in forming a barrier in the Low Countries.

The keen and threatening question to which the claim of Prussia on Saxony gave rise, did not divert Lord Castlereagh's attention for a moment from the grand object, in so far as the security of Great Britain was concerned, of keeping France back from the Rhine, and securing an adequate barrier against her ambition in the Low Countries. He foresaw distinctly that this was the point where the real danger would one day arise; and that, however strongly and sincerely the present Government of France might disclaim any such project, the time would come under the present *or some other dynasty*, when these assurances would be forgotten, and the whole force of France, aided by all the allies, revolutionary or otherwise, she could summon to her standard, would be devoted to destroying the kingdom of the Netherlands and regaining the entire frontier of the Rhine for herself.* Mr Pitt, whose far-seeing mind looked deep into

d'elle. Lord Stewart ayant assez ingénûment avoué cette influence des *alliés*, M. de Talleyrand, hors de lui, répondit brusquement au frère de Lord Castlereagh, 'Puisque vous êtes encore les *alliés de Chaumont*, restez entre vous. Aujourd'hui même l'ambassade Française quittera Vienne, et tout ce que vous ferez sera nul pour elle, et pour les intérêts sacrifiés. L'Europe sera instruite de ce qui s'est passé, la France connaîtra le rôle qu'on a voulu lui faire jouer, et l'Angleterre saura quelle conduite faible, inconséquente, a tenue son représentant. Elle saura qu'après avoir livré la Saxe et la Pologne, il a repoussé le secours avec lequel il aurait pu les sauver.' Ces paroles menaçantes pour Lord Castlereagh, à qui elles préparaient une situation fort difficile dans le Parlement Britannique, émurent singulièrement Lord Stewart, et il courut avertir son frère de l'orage qui se formait."—THIERS, xviii. 574, 575.

* Lord Castlereagh's letter to the Duke of Wellington, of date October 1, 1814, fully explains his views on this subject, and is one of the most striking proofs of his statesmanlike wisdom and prophetic sagacity. He says—"The great question for the house of Orange, as well as for us, is to weigh what is the best security for peace, *and for keeping the Low Countries out of the hands of France*. In this view of the subject, *beyond all others the most essential for Great Britain to look to*, I doubt the policy of building our system of defence exclusively upon the Prince of Orange's power, enfeebled as it must be for great military exertions by the genius of his people and by the principles of his Government. You will weigh this in deciding on the alternatives into which the question resolves itself. We should both wish to press what was most acceptable to the Prince of Orange; but the point ought to be ruled upon larger principles; and in examining them, I am always led to revert with considerable favour to a policy which Mr Pitt, in the year 1806, had strongly at heart, which was to tempt Prussia to put herself forward on the left bank of the Rhine more in military contact with France. I know there may be objections to this, as placing a Power peculiarly military, and consequently somewhat

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futurity, clearly anticipated this danger, and in the arrangements which he projected in 1806, in the event of the Coalition proving successful, one was to bring Prussia up to the Rhine, and over that river to the frontier of old France. It was impossible now, however, to carry that project into execution; for the jealousy of Austria and the other Powers in the Confederacy would have been instantly aroused by such an addition to the power of any state in Germany. All were agreed that Belgium should be annexed to Holland, under the Prince of Orange, who was to be created King of the Netherlands; but it was by no means so apparent how the provinces between it and Mayence, including the important fortress of Luxemburg, should be disposed of. It was indispensable that they should be bestowed on some Power possessed of military force adequate, with the assistance of Great Britain and the Netherlands, to their defence, and actuated by an interest adverse to their absorption by France. It was at one time proposed to give them to Bavaria in return for the loss of the Tyrol and Salzburg, resumed by Austria; but to this it was justly objected that the Cabinet of Munich had a hereditary jealousy of Austria, had often been in alliance with France against that Power, and that, in their hands, the bulwark of Europe against France might become the outpost of France against Europe.* Undoubtedly this

encroaching, so extensively in contact with Holland and the Low Countries. But as this is only a secondary danger, we should not sacrifice to it our first object, *which is to provide effectually against the systematic views of France to possess herself of the Low Countries* and the territories on the left bank of the Rhine—a plan which, however discountenanced by the present French Government, *will infallibly revive whenever circumstances shall favour its execution.*" —LORD CASTLEREAGH *to the* DUKE OF WELLINGTON, *Vienna, October* 1, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 144, 145.

* "In Hardenberg's Paris *projet*, Bavaria was indemnified for the Tyrol, Salzburg, &c., partly on the right bank of the Maine; Prussia being placed behind the Rhine, with a *lisière* only on the left bank, her flanks supported by Wesel and Mayence. To this arrangement Austria and Bavaria positively refuse their concurrence, as giving to Prussia the entire command of their only great river, in addition to the Rhine, the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula. . . . This resistance has induced Prussia to endeavour to find an expedient, by tempting Bavaria to place herself in the more exposed positions on the left

project presented many advantages. "It is supported," said Lord Castlereagh, "by the obvious inability of the German provinces on the left bank of the Rhine, by any combination of their own means, permanently to secure themselves against France; the necessity of interesting other Powers in their defence; and the impossibility of doing so effectually, except by giving them a substantive footing beyond the Rhine. To give a decided German character to the politics of Bavaria, now closely united with Austria, she ought to be liberally treated, and have her territorial interests rendered incompatible with the French scheme of extending themselves to the Rhine. If this reasoning is solid, there can be no doubt that the support of so highly military a Power as Bavaria on the left flank, with Prussia in second line to Holland, and Bavaria as proposed in the present plan, presents a much more imposing front to France than Holland, spread out to the Moselle, with Prussia behind the Rhine, and the territories between the Moselle and the Rhine *morcellés*, as mere indemnities, between the Grand-duke of Baden and other petty princes."[1]

[1] Lord Castlereagh to the Duke of Wellington, Oct. 1, 1814; Cast. Cor. x. 143, 144.

58. It is ultimately agreed to give Luxemburg to the King of the Netherlands.

On the other hand, the Duke of Wellington supported the annexation of Luxemburg, if possible, to Prussia, with the whole territory on the left bank as far as Huy, and if that could not be effected, that it should be given to the King of the Netherlands. His reasoning on this point, mainly founded on the improbability of Bavaria being permanently either willing or able to keep that important barrier fortress from France, appears to be well founded, and it would have been for the advantage of Europe if it had been given effect to, as Prussia is

bank of the Rhine. . . . To effect this, it is suggested that the King of Bavaria should reassume his ancient subjects in the Palatinate, strengthened by the territory and fortress of Luxemburg, by which concession Prussia expects to keep Bavaria to the southward of the Maine, and to arrange that Mayence shall be an imperial fortress, instead of being given to Bavaria, with regulations which shall secure the free navigation of the river to the southern states."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to the* DUKE OF WELLINGTON, *Vienna, October* 1, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 143.

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obviously a much more important Power to interest in the independence of the Low Countries than either the King of Belgium or Bavaria.* Lord Castlereagh was convinced by the Duke's reasoning on this point, which entirely coincided with his own view, of what would be expedient in the abstract if the Powers interested could be prevailed on to carry it into effect. But he soon found that the concession of Luxemburg with so considerable a territory to Prussia was impossible, from the determined resistance opposed by France and Bavaria to any project which gave the former Power the command for any distance of both banks of the Rhine. It became necessary, therefore, to make a choice between the Netherlands and Bavaria to be intrusted with the sovereignty and defence of Luxemburg; and, for the reasons stated by the Duke of Wellington, Lord Castlereagh

* In reply to Lord Castlereagh's letter of October 1, the Duke of Wellington wrote on October 17, "I agree so far in principle with you, that I think it would be desirable that, if possible, all the territories on the left of the Rhine should belong to one Power only, besides the sovereign of the Netherlands, and that that Power should be Prussia. If all this territory cannot be given to Prussia, it is better that a part should be given to Bavaria than that it should be parcelled out among several Powers. It must be observed, however, of Bavaria, that that Power has generally been in the opposite system to ours, and that any distant territory in the hands of so weak a Power as Bavaria must continue to be, is seldom well defended. There will arise the question of Luxemburg. *It is essential to the defence of the Netherlands to keep that fortress out of the hands of the French;* at the same time, I see the military inconvenience of extending so far the system of the sovereign of the Netherlands. *I should rely upon Prussia keeping that fortress, but not upon Bavaria.*

"There is another view in which the disposal of Luxemburg is important, and that is the standing connection between that duchy and the provinces on the left of the Meuse. The inconvenience of the separation of a few cantons ceded to France has been felt and complained of by the Netherlanders; and I fear they will feel more severely the separation of the provinces on the right of the Meuse, with which they have been so long connected, and in which many of them have properties. This point deserves consideration. Upon the whole, what I should prefer for the Netherlands would be that Prussia should have the territory on the left of the Rhine, to a line drawn from Huy to that river; and that the Prince of Orange should from that line have both banks of the Meuse to the left bank of the Rhine. If this arrangement could be made, Luxemburg would be more secure in the hands of the sovereign of the Netherlands than in those of the King of Bavaria, and should be given to the former."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *October* 17, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 166, 167.

acquiesced in the annexation of it to the former, with the territory of Lernburg; not, however, as part of the kingdom of Netherlands, but as a separate principality, forming part of, and defended by, the German confederacy.

59. Affairs of Italy.

The affairs of Italy were not so complicated at first sight, but fraught with more material interests in the end than either those of Saxony or Flanders.* The circumstances of that peninsula were very peculiar, and such that it was extremely difficult to say what course would be the best to adopt regarding it. Two points were perfectly clear, and on them all were agreed. The first was, that Austria must resume her ancient possessions in the Milanese and Venetia as far as the Po and the Ticino, which formed a clear and well-defined boundary. The former of these territories having been her own before they were wrested from her by France in 1796, the latter ceded to her by the treaty with France in 1797, there was no earthly pretext on which their resumption by that Power could be resisted. Add to this that the desire of the Cabinet of Vienna to regain them was so strong, and their influence in the Congress was so great, that they could not have been wrested from her without a general war, and entirely breaking up the concord between Great Britain, France, and Austria—so essential to presenting a barrier against the ambitious projects of Russia on the Vistula. The idea either of forming an Italian confederacy or erecting one single kingdom in the peninsula, so much in vogue in subsequent times, was then felt to be so utterly impracticable that it was never even mooted by any one at the Congress, though suggested by some ardent inexperienced philanthropists in private memorials. Restoration of the old regime and separate governments, was then the universal wish. There were many secret aspirations in Venice, but it was not for a united

* The Powers to whom the arrangement of Italian affairs was intrusted by the Congress of Vienna were Austria and Spain, as the two most immediately interested, along with France, Russia, and England, as mediators.

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Italy, of which they should form a part, but for the old standard of St Mark and the restoration of the ancient Doges: the Milanese sighed for the days of their independence and the sway of their old Dukes; the Florentines were counting the days till the paternal government of their Grand-dukes was restored; the Romans were hailing in imagination the return of the Pope to the Eternal City; the Neapolitans, distracted between their ancient and their present rulers, were desirous only of having a flourishing nobility and splendid court in their beautiful capital; the Genoese were praying for the restoration of their ancient government, and earnestly deprecating the annexation to Piedmont with which they were threatened. The dream, "*della unita Italiana*," was then utterly out of the question, for the best of all reasons—that it was inconsistent with existing rights and at variance with the universal wish.

60. Reasons for annexation of Genoa to Piedmont.

The second point upon which the sovereigns were all agreed was that, notwithstanding the loudly-expressed disinclination of the inhabitants at the annexation of Genoa with its adjacent territory to Piedmont, it was necessary to carry that annexation into effect. The necessity for this arose from the exposed situation of the latter country, which, of course, would be the first to be assailed if the French Government resumed its ambitious designs on Italy, and the danger which would threaten the whole states of the peninsula, if their armies should gain possession of the magnificent harbour of Genoa. Troops could be landed there in forty-eight hours from Toulon, and in a week more they might be either at Turin, Milan, or Florence.* Genoa, independent, could make no sort of resistance to such an irruption; it was only by interesting the warlike and comparatively powerful state of Piedmont in its defence that any security could be obtained on this side

* How entirely was this verified in the beginning of the war between France and Austria in 1858!

against the renewed incursions of the French arms. Experience had proved that if they once got the command of the passes of the Alps and the harbour of Genoa, the whole plain of Lombardy would be at their feet; and again, as in 1796, the conquest of Europe might begin with that of the plains watered by the Po. Aware of the paramount necessity of averting such a catastrophe, Lord Castlereagh, as already mentioned, had carefully enjoined Lord William Bentinck to avoid anything in his proclamations or conduct which might lead the Genoese to infer that their separate nationality was to be restored; and the same orders were reiterated on a subsequent occasion.* The disregard of these injunctions by the English commander occasioned no small embarrassment to the British Government; but Lord Castlereagh did all in his power to soften the blow to the Genoese by stipulating the retention of their ancient laws and customs when transferred to the Sardinian crown.†

61. Lord Castlereagh's views on the Spanish Government.

The restoration of Ferdinand VII. to the throne of Spain had already been accomplished *via facto*, and the Congress of Vienna had little to do, excepting what related to the suppression of the slave trade, with his

* "With respect to the arrangement your Lordship has made for the provisional government of Genoa, it is material that it should not be considered as prejudging the future system which it may be expedient to apply to that part of Europe. Your Lordship will adopt such measures as may conciliate the feelings of the people; *but you will avoid referring to the ancient form of government*, in terms which may excite disappointment, should considerations arising out of the general interests induce the adoption of a different arrangement."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK, *May* 6, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 15.

† "The messenger who carries this letter to your Lordship is also the bearer of my order to General Sir John Dalrymple to transfer, as far as depends on him, the provisional government of Genoa to the King of Sardinia, and to act with the troops under his command as an auxiliary corps in his Majesty's service till further orders. I hope your Lordship will be satisfied that, if we have felt it not possible to preserve to Genoa her separate existence, we have acted up to the spirit of the assurances of protection which you gave the people. I trust you will approve the safeguards obtained for the rights and interests of the Genoese, and that you will employ your personal influence to bring them and their future sovereign together under the most conciliatory auspices."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK *Vienna, December* 18, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 221.

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Government. But Lord Castlereagh had already, immediately after he set foot in his ancient dominions, given him the strongest counsels as to the principles of his future government, which, if followed out, would have in all probability prevented the disastrous revolution and sanguinary civil war which afterwards bathed the Peninsula in blood. It remains a striking monument of the combined attachment to order, resistance to oppression, whether monarchical or democratic, and love of real freedom, which formed the leading features of that statesman's character.*

A more serious subject connected with the Italian peninsula, which was every day attracting more attention,

* "Although the conduct of the Cortes and Regency has latterly been marked by a firm adherence to the principles of the alliance, so far as the mere existence of the constitution is at stake, it is impossible to conceive that any change tranquilly effected can well be for the worse. We are entitled to pronounce now, upon a certain extent of experience, that, in practice as in theory, it is amongst the worst of the modern productions of that nature.

"I am glad to hear that the King is not disposed, in looking to a change, to aim at the restoration of the ancient order of things. I am confident there is not vigour and ability enough amongst his adherents to sustain such a system against the temper of the times, and the party which exists in Spain favourable to a form of government more or less free. If his Majesty announces to the nation his determination to give effect to the main principles of a constitutional regime, I think it is probable he may extinguish the existing arrangement with impunity and re-establish one more consistent with the efficiency of the executive power, and which may restore the great landed proprietors and the clergy to a due share of authority; but to succeed in establishing a permanent system, he must speak to the nation, and not give it the character of a military resolution; in doing which, the language of Louis XVIII. may afford him some useful hints.

"I hope, if we are to encounter the hazards of a new constitutional experiment in Spain, in addition to the many others now in progress in Europe, that the persons charged with the work will not again fall into the inconceivable absurdity of banishing from the legislature the ministers of the Crown; to which error, more perhaps than to any other, may be attributed the incapacity which has distinguished the march of every one of these systems which has placed the main authorities of the constitution in hostility, instead of alliance, with each other. I have every confidence in the discretion with which you will act in the impending crisis. You will not hesitate to afford your counsel and support, where you may be of opinion that the just influence of the British Government can promote the happiness of our ally; but, where you cannot see your way clear as to the probable result, I should wish you to abstain rather than commit your Government by any systematic, precipitate, or too ostensible interference in the internal affairs of Spain."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* SIR H. WELLESLEY, *Paris, May* 10, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 25, 26.

was that of Murat and the kingdom of Naples. That sovereign continued with a powerful army of 50,000 men on the Po, and it was difficult to say against which side it would be directed. In truth he did not know himself. His whole object was to retain his crown whichever side proved uppermost, and that could only be done by preserving a dubious neutrality till fortune had declared decidedly for one party or the other. He was no stranger to the designs of Napoleon in the island of Elba to regain, by a sudden descent upon its coasts, the crown of France, and he was naturally inclined to support him in the attempt; but he had no intention of doing so unless there was a reasonable prospect of success. He was waiting, therefore, for Napoleon to strike the first blow. On the other hand, the Allied Powers felt a reluctance to approach the subject, from the well-known and honourable feelings of the Emperor regarding it, and his determination at all hazards to keep his word, pledged to Buonaparte by the treaty of 11th April at Fontainebleau. The most alarming reports, however, were received from Paris of the impending danger, which was represented as much increased by the known treachery of Murat and the residence of Napoleon, subject to no control, within a few days' sail of the coast of France.* So far did this go, and so menacing were the accounts transmitted of the discontent and incipient treason in the French metropolis,

* "Les principales Puissances ne commencerent à raisonner sur la translation de Buonaparte dans une autre hémisphère que lorsque les arrangements majeurs eurent été arrêtés, et que les plaintes des souverains d'Italie, notamment du Grand-duc de Toscane, sur le voisinage de Buonaparte se furent accumulées. C'est alors que le plénipotentiaire Portugais, Palmella, offrit l'une des Azores pour lieu de résidence de Buonaparte, et que l'Angleterre proposa Ste Lucie ou Ste Helène; mais l'aveu de leurs cours et le transport de ce personage dans l'une de ces îles emportaient d'indispensables delais."—*Congrès de Vienne;* CAPEFIGUE, i. 84.

"Le Prince de Talleyrand avait écrit à Louis XVIII:—'Que d'après l'agitation qui regnait en Italie il conviendrait qu'un corps de 30,000 hommes fut réuni entre Lyon et Chambery pour être prêt à agir, mais que le mouvement devait se faire avec le moins d'éclat possible à fin de ne pas donner d'ombrage à l'Autriche et au Roi de Sardaigne. Le Maréchal Soult reçut au même tems l'ordre formel de se tenir prêt à toutes éventualités.'"—CAPEFIGUE, i. 89.

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that Metternich submitted formal queries to Fouché as to the course which, in the event of Napoleon's reappearing, the army would pursue, and received very unsatisfactory answers,* singularly prophetic of the future of France. A general and vague feeling of disquietude accordingly prevailed, both in the Royalist circles at Paris and the Congress of Vienna, on this subject; and so far did matters go, that it was under the consideration of the Allied Cabinets whether Murat should not be forcibly dispossessed of his dominions, and the Duke of Wellington was consulted by Louis XVIII. and Lord Liverpool as to the force which would be required to accomplish the object if Great Britain should be charged with the operation.†

In truth neither party was in good faith in regard to

* "Ce n'était pas chose totalement imprevue pour quelques ministres, et principalement pour M. de Metternich, le retour de Napoléon, objet d'effroi pour le plus grand nombre et qui fit passer M. de Talleyrand d'une hauteur insultante à la plus honteuse pusillanimité. Le Prince de Metternich, qui jugea promptement la situation critique des Bourbons, avait précédemment et secrètement adressé à Fouché les questions suivantes: 1. Si Napoléon revenait qu'arriverait-il? 2. Que résulterait de l'apparition du Roi de Rome sur les frontières de la France? 3. Quelle serait la direction d'un mouvement national insurrectionnel? L'ancien Ministre de Police répondait: 1. Si le premier régiment envoyé contre Napoléon passait de son côté, il en serait le même de tout l'armée. 2. Si le Roi de Rome était amené sur nos frontières par un corps Autrichien, tout le monde serait pour lui. 3. Si le mouvement était intérieur on prononcerait pour le Duc d'Orleans.—HARDENBERG, xii. 475, 476."

† "I concur very much in opinion with the King (Louis XVIII.) that the chances of disturbance, particularly in this country, are very much increased by leaving Murat on the throne of Naples. If he were gone, Buonaparte in Elba would not be an object of great dread. You must be the best judge whether you ought or can come forward on this occasion. If you should determine to do so, what follows will show you the means which are requisite, which are in your power, and my opinion of the probable expense.

"If the British Government should undertake this operation, it should be performed by the armies of the Allies of the Peninsula, which might be got in the following proportions—viz., 10,000 infantry from Spain, 12,000 infantry from Portugal, 20,000 of all arms from Great Britain, and 10,000 of all arms from Sicily, with 60 pieces of field artillery and a battering-train from Great Britain; the whole to assemble in Sicily, in transports to be found by Great Britain. This force, with 40,000 men, which might be sent from the southern ports of France by sea into the Roman States, would be more than sufficient to insure the object almost without striking a blow. . . . This operation would probably last four months from the time the troops would embark in the Peninsula till their return, and would, calculating their expenses at a dollar a-day for each man, cost £1,200,000."—DUKE OF WELLINGTON *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *December* 25, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 226, 227.

the treaty of the 11th April, in so far as it regarded Napoleon and Murat; nor perhaps were the circumstances such that good faith was practicable. There is unfortunately more truth than is generally supposed in the common adage, that from "the prison to the grave," for a dethroned sovereign, "there is but a step." Ostensibly at peace, the two contracting parties to this treaty were in reality secretly endeavouring to undermine each other. The Cabinet of the Bourbons alleged with truth that Buonaparte had never intended to execute the treaty of Fontainebleau; that his partisans were everywhere intriguing with the utmost activity, both in France and Italy, to effect his restoration; and that it would be perfect madness to go on making the stipulated payments to him and his family from the resources of France, as they would all be applied to fitting out of armaments, or fomenting insurrections, to effect their destruction. The events which immediately followed proved that these surmises had too much foundation, and that the peace of Europe had never been more endangered than by the intrigues to which they referred. Napoleon and Murat alleged, with equal truth, that the treaty had never been carried out, save by sending him to Elba, by the Allied sovereigns, and that France in particular had entirely failed in implementing her pecuniary obligations towards them. They complained that no part of the stipulated annuity of £100,000 a-year had been paid to the ex-Emperor, and that it was notorious that the Allies were only waiting for a decent pretext to break with them altogether, and send Buonaparte to a distant island, while they re-established the Bourbons on the throne of Naples.[1]

63. Bad faith on both sides in regard to Napoleon and Murat.

[1] Thiers, xviii. 610, 611.

The Allied sovereigns, however, had in the first instance undoubtedly intended to keep Murat on the throne of Naples, and to preserve Sicily as a separate monarchy to its ancient sovereign, with such an indemnity as could be found for the loss of his Continental possessions. They had even gone so far as to discuss the abandonment of

64. The Allies really meant at first to have left Naples to Murat.

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the Ionian Islands by Great Britain as a means of furnishing the desired compensation, how inadequate soever.* Although the British had for several years during the war occupied the Ionian Islands, yet they had never been considered as part of the British dominions, and Lord Castlereagh was rather inclined to cede them to the King of Sicily if Murat retained Naples, or to Austria if he was restored to his Continental dominions. The great object was to prevent their falling into the hands of Russia, in whose possession it would have become a mere outpost for intrigues in Greece and Turkey. The destiny of Naples, however, still hung in suspense from the uncertainty of Murat as to what he was to do, and of the Allies what course they were to pursue regarding him, when they were relieved of their embarrassment, as will immediately appear,[1] by a rash step on his part in favour

[1] Thiers, xviii. 607-609; Cast. Cor. x. 225.

* "We have hitherto never laid claim to retain the Ionian Islands as a British possession. On the contrary, at Chatillon and Paris, there was a *sort of understanding that they were to be given to the King of Sicily as a part of his indemnity.* So long as he is excluded from Naples, to this appropriation, if not declined by him, I think we might hold, to the exclusion of any other project; and so long as Ferdinand IV. does not occupy the continent of Italy, Austria will not object to his having the Ionian Islands; but she would object, and justly, to both shores of the entrance to the Adriatic being in the hands of the same Power. The events that have passed since the peace of Paris, and especially the conduct of Russia with respect to the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, might afford some ground for a new claim on our part to further advantages. But if our policy is to try the chance of peace, I doubt the prudence of directly hazarding a new demand of this description on our own part.

"In disposing of these islands there are, as it appears to me, two paramount objects to be attended to: the one to provide adequately for the protection of the people who have so long confided themselves to our care; the other, not to suffer Russia to acquire any establishment in those islands, to the hazard of the internal tranquillity both of Greece and Hungary, which latter kingdom is full of Greeks. With respect to the first of these objects, it might be secured by some arrangement like that lately framed for Genoa; but, in order to steer clear of the old republican form of government, which might afford a pretext for the renewal of Russian protection, it appears to me desirable to give a direct sovereignty over these islands, under whatever conditions may be thought right, to some acknowledged European Power; and if this Power cannot be Great Britain, in order to exclude Russia, we may insist that the sovereign authority shall belong to a local power—that is, to the King of Sicily, or to the Emperor of Austria, according as the kingdom of Naples may remain with Murat, or return under the dominion of the ancient family. In the latter case, the sovereignty to belong to Austria."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL *Vienna, December* 24, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 224, 225.

of Napoleon, which at once determined the course to be pursued regarding him.

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65. Affairs of Switzerland.

In the general arrangement of the affairs of Europe, with a view to forming an effective barrier at every point against the ambition of France, it was early felt as indispensable that great attention should be paid to the affairs of Switzerland. The world had not forgotten that it was from the summit of the maritime Alps that the torrent first descended, which, after spreading over Lombardy, ere long swept in devastating floods over the whole of Europe. For the interests of peace and general independence, it was indispensable that a strong frontier should be provided in these lofty mountains, capable of opposing an effectual barrier in that direction against the enterprises of French ambition. The affairs of Switzerland were referred, accordingly, to a separate commission, in which the representatives of Russia, Austria, and France bore the principal parts. Some difficulty was at first experienced in consequence of the opposition of the cantons of Berne, Uri, Lucerne, Schwytz, and Unterwalden, which were ruling cantons, to the admission of Vaud, Argovia, St Gall, and the Ticino, which were subject cantons, to a participation of their own sovereign powers. It was obviously unjust, and contrary to the spirit of the age, to continue so absurd a dominion as that of one petty state over another state; and, fortunately, by the moderation and persuasive influence of the Duc de Dalberg, the French representative in the commission, and Sir Charles Stewart, on the part of England, and Baron Humboldt, on the part of Prussia, the matter was amicably adjusted. The principle of equal rights and privileges in all the cantons was admitted as the basis of the confederacy, and the objections of the canton of Berne were removed by the grant of the district of Porentruy, and the ancient bishopric of Bâle, beyond the Jura, which lay beyond the frontier of old France, and was at the disposal of the Allies.[1] It was further agreed that Geneva,

[1] Thiers, xviii. 605, 606; Congrès de Vienne, ii. 337, 341; Rapport Generale iii. 5; and Protocols, 1, 2, 3. Ibid.

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Neufchatel, and the Valais, which had formed part of the French empire, and were in like manner beyond the limits of the old monarchy, should form three additional cantons, in addition to the nineteen formerly constituted, and that the whole should be put under the express and formal guarantee of the great Powers of Europe. This important safeguard reconciled all interests in Switzerland, the concerns of which were regulated by the Swiss committee with the most scrupulous regard to justice and impartiality.

66. Difficulties experienced by Lord Castlereagh in his efforts to procure the abolition of the slave trade.

There remained one other question far more exciting and interesting to the British people than any of the important territorial settlements at stake in the Congress, and that was the immediate and final *abolition of the slave trade*. It has been already mentioned that the anti-slavery party in Great Britain, of which Mr Wilberforce and Mr Clarkson were the heads, was thoroughly persuaded that Great Britain had only to insist on the instant and universal abolition of this traffic, by a unanimous declaration of the Congress that it was piracy, punishable with death by any captor, to effect its immediate and total abolition. They were equally persuaded that Lord Castlereagh had influence enough at the Congress to obtain such a declaration, and accordingly all their efforts were directed to create a pressure on him, sufficient to effect that object. The nation was worked up to a perfect phrenzy on this subject, and they were in an especial manner urgent to induce the British Government to give back some sugar island to France as an inducement to concur in the abolition.*

* "An opinion prevails here that if some colony or island were offered by Great Britain to France—say Tobago, St Lucia, or any other—the latter would give up the additional article in the treaty, and join in the immediate abolition of the slave trade. Without an exchange, it is said that the present Government of France dare not do it; for, without something to show, as gained on the one hand, by giving up on the other, the French people would think their monarch degraded, and at the command of England and her Allies; the consequences of which might be serious: but, if the French Government were to gain something in the manner spoken of, it is certainly believed here that England may have the abolition to-morrow."—THOMAS CLARKSON, ESQ. *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *September* 10, 1814; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 117.

They found in Lord Castlereagh an able, zealous, and efficient advocate of their views, but they much overrated his ability to move the inert mass of the Congress, intent on other matters more immediately interesting to themselves, on the subject. The great Continental Powers having, with the exception of France, no colonial possessions, regarded the slave trade as a remote question with which they had little concern, and which it behoved the states more immediately interested to regulate for themselves. Unacquainted by their own experience with the tempests of passion which sometimes sweep over a free state, when the depths of religion or humanity are stirred, they could not comprehend the earnestness with which Lord Castlereagh pleaded the cause of the negro race; and accustomed to suspect an interested motive in every political change which is strenuously advocated, they settled into the belief that selfish objects were in reality at the bottom of this pretended zeal for the interests of humanity, and that the whole rested on a regard for their own interests. They thought that the English, seeing they had injured their own colonies by the stoppage of the supply of slave labour, were desirous of preventing any other nation from enjoying that advantage.[1]

[1] Lord Castlereagh to Lord Liverpool, Dec. 18, 1814. MS.

67. Lord Castlereagh's conference with Talleyrand on the subject.

Lord Castlereagh experienced the greatest difficulty from these causes in his efforts to bring the Congress to any common measure or united action regarding the slave trade. From France and Spain, who had valuable slave colonies, he experienced decided resistance; from the other Powers indifference or lukewarm support. The former alleged that their colonies would be ruined if shut out from the ordinary supply of slave labour; the latter, that they did not understand the question, and felt averse to taking a decided line on a matter regarding which opinions were so much at variance, and which experience had not yet decided either way. Lord Castlereagh, however, was not discouraged. Fully convinced

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himself of the political wisdom as well as moral justice of the course he was pursuing, he was indefatigable in his efforts to attain his object. What he did will be best judged of by the account of it given by M. Thiers, founded on the daily reports of M. de Talleyrand to the French Cabinet. "Lord Castlereagh," says he, "demanded, in the first instance, the absolute and unqualified abolition of the slave trade on the coasts of Africa. Nor was he contented with this. He contended, that to secure this object, all the Powers should mutually concede to each other the right of search, to see whether slaves were clandestinely conveyed, and it should be agreed to exclude absolutely the colonial produce of such countries as would not agree to such a convention. That was demanding a great deal, for it was well known that the right of search would be exercised by no Power but England, which alone was interested in putting down the slave trade. On principle, the negotiation on this point should have been confined to the maritime Powers; but Lord Castlereagh, finding that he stood alone among them, had suggested that the Continental Powers should take part in the conferences, and he had influence enough to obtain that object. He thus obtained a little more support. He endeavoured to persuade the French, Spanish, and Portuguese commissioners that it was dangerous to have colonies in which a multitude of blacks were alongside of a few whites, and that it would be far better to confine themselves to the negroes whom they already had, and the children whom they would certainly get if they were properly treated. To this it was replied that this was true, where, as in the British colonies, the blacks bore a vast proportion to the whites, but that in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies the number of the two colours was nearly equal; that the English, during the maritime war, had prepared their own colonies for the abolition of the slave trade, by storing them with blacks, but that they, having lost the command of the sea, had not had the means

of doing so, and thus would be taken at a disadvantage; that some years would be requisite to obtain an adequate supply of slave labour, and then the abolition of the slave trade might be proposed with some degree of equality. Numerous conferences on the subject took place, in most of which Lord Castlereagh stood alone; and at length he was compelled to content himself with an engagement to abolish the trade, by France in five, and by Spain and Portugal in eight years.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 613, 614.

68. Resolution of the Congress on the subject.

"Lord Castlereagh would have wished more, but no one would listen to him. As to the reciprocal right of visit, it encountered universal resistance. It was met by the principle that during peace every nation had a right to regulate its own vessels according to its inclination, and that the hazardous and invidious right of search arose only during war, when it was required to detect goods, contraband of war, surreptitiously introduced under neutral flags. As to the proposal that the colonial produce of such nations as would not agree to such a right of search, should be excluded or heavily taxed, it was observed that such a restriction might be suitable for the time when the slave trade was universally proscribed, but that it would be premature to introduce it at a time when the trade was to be formally permitted to certain nations by express treaty. The other Powers all concurred in these views, and Castlereagh, wishing to have something specious to present to the British Parliament on the subject, was compelled to content himself with a declaration from the Congress, condemning the slave trade as a crime against civilisation and humanity, and expressing a unanimous wish for its speedy abolition."[2]

[2] Thiers, xviii. 614; Decl. of 8th Feb., in Parl. Deb., xxxii. 200.

69. Wise regulation of the Congress regarding free navigation of rivers.

Another subject, interesting in a very high degree to the Continental nations, and especially Germany, met with a more cordial reception, and was resolved in a more satisfactory manner by the Congress. This was the free navigation of great rivers. These great highways, provided by the wisdom of Nature for the use and convenience of

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man, and the cheapest mode of communication among nations, had been deprived in Central Europe of nearly their whole utility, by the prohibitions or heavy duties which the different sovereigns through whose territories they flowed had established, in regard to merchandise passing by them, for the encouragement of their own manufactures, or the purpose of raising a revenue by their transit for themselves. In this way the Danube, the Rhine, the Elbe, the Weser, and the Oder, had become so beset with toll-bars, erected by the different states through whose territories they passed, that for all the purposes of internal navigation or commerce, they had become nearly useless. So generally had this evil been felt, that in the beginning of the Congress a committee was appointed for the purpose of fixing certain principles for the navigation of rivers; and it discharged its duties with fidelity and justice. It was provided that the navigation of all rivers capable of bearing vessels should be free; that the sovereigns of their banks might interdict or load with duties the *landing* of any goods they chose on their shores, but could not stop or interfere with their passage along to other states; that the only duties they were entitled to exact, were moderate tonnage dues, irrespective of the value of the cargoes; and that in consideration of these dues they should be bound to make and uphold good towing paths. These just and equitable principles were solemnly embodied in a formal act, which is one of the noblest monuments of the Congress, and, like the Code Napoleon, will, from its intrinsic merits, continue to form the common law of nations in this particular, after the authority of the Powers which introduced it has passed away.[1]

[1] Congrès de Vienne, iii. 262, 207, 238, 288; Acte de Navigation, March 24, 1815; Ibid. iv. 170.

The Congress of Vienna had now concluded its labours, and accomplished its vast undertaking. The chief actors on the stage were preparing to take their departure from the Austrian capital; that of the Emperor Alexander was fixed, after several adjournments, for the 20th Feb-

ruary 1815; that of Lord Castlereagh for the 15th of the same month. The British Cabinet, though reluctant to remove him from the theatre of his important exertions, felt too strongly the need of his tutelary arm to shield them in the House of Commons, to be able to dispense any longer with his services in Parliament. Already in the middle of January Lord Liverpool and the Duke of Wellington had written to him, urging his return before the meeting of the House of Commons in the beginning of February, alleging as a reason that Government had lost ground sensibly during the short session which had sat before Christmas, and that they absolutely required his presence when it again assembled on 9th February.*

70. Lord Castlereagh leaves the Congress of Vienna, and returns to England to meet Parliament. Jan. 16, 1815.

* "I must inform you that it is absolutely necessary that you should be here as soon as possible after the meeting of Parliament. This is the unanimous opinion of all my colleagues, and of those members of the House of Commons whom we are in the habit of consulting on such matters. You can have no idea how much ground the Government lost in the House of Commons, in the short session before Christmas; and the unfortunate circumstance in our present situation is this—that the debates of most importance which are likely to occur during the session, must take place before the beginning of April. The questions of contest will be those of finance, and the political questions will principally be discussed and brought in as auxiliaries. We do not find that the American peace has in any degree relieved our embarrassments. Our financial difficulties, however they might have afterwards increased, would not have pressed upon us more severely during the present year, if the American war had continued, than they do now. . . . We shall now be placed in the situation of contending for what will be called a war expenditure in time of peace; and that under the circumstances of a general cry raised amongst all classes of people on the subject of the property tax, and of a deep alarm prevailing amongst the landed interest, in consequence of the great and unexpected fall in the prices of every description of grain.

"I can assure you that I feel, in common with my colleagues, the greatest reluctance in proposing to you to withdraw at this moment from Vienna. Last year we could spare you: everything was quiet in Parliament—everybody waiting for the result—and no symptom of party-spirit appeared. Now, very few persons give themselves any concern about what is passing at Vienna, except in as far as it is connected with expense; and I never have seen more party animosity than was manifested in November, and, I understand, still appears at the Clubs and in private societies."—LORD LIVERPOOL *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *January* 16, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 240, 241.

"We shall want you on the 9th February, or a few days after. The discussions relative to the Property Tax and the Bank Restriction must come on immediately. The consideration of the Corn Laws cannot be long deferred, and, I have no doubt, will be mooted before the Houses have been assembled a week. Ground once lost by Government on questions of their importance in public opinion is not easily recovered. It is of importance that the first impression should be favourable, and should inspire confidence. Our friends

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These two great statesmen both complained bitterly of the factious spirit which was getting up in Parliament, and the violent opposition which was arising against the Government, which had brought the war to a successful termination, now that the anxieties and suspense of it was over. In truth, however, a more general cause was coming into operation than either of these leaders were aware, of, and the violent party spirit of which they complained in the House of Commons was only, as is generally the case, the reflex of its action on the country. This cause was the rapid diminution of expenditure by Government, in consequence of the termination of the war, and the still more rapid contraction of the currency from the impending resumption of cash payments by the Bank of England, which by the existing law was to take place in six months after a general peace. These causes of paramount importance were the real reason of all the subsequent difficulties which beset the career both of Lord Castlereagh and Sir Charles Stewart. And thus, at the very moment when they were bringing the external difficulties of the country to a glorious termination, a new set of embarrassments, arising out of social causes, were rising into operation, which occasioned embarrassments not less serious, and had the effect ultimately of bringing the elder of the two brothers to an untimely grave.

71. Arrival of Wellington at Vienna. Feb. 3.

Lord Castlereagh was succeeded, as representative of Great Britain at the Congress, by the Duke of Wellington, while Sir Charles Stewart remained at his post at Vienna, and daily informed his brother of what was going forward at the great diplomatic headquarters. The arrival of the

*en première ligne*, in the House of Commons, have proved themselves not equal to the burden. Those *en seconde ligne* might do—viz., Manners, Sutton, Robinson, and Peel; but they cannot well come forward, except upon business connected with their own departments, unless they have a leader to whom they can look up. I am sorry to say Robinson was very idle, scarcely opened his mouth; the others have gained great credit, particularly Peel."—LORD LIVERPOOL *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *January* 12, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 239.

renowned British commander at the Austrian capital was of great service to France from the mode in which he expressed himself in regard to its ruling sovereign. "No sooner," says M. Thiers, "did the Duke of Wellington arrive in Vienna than he rendered real service to Louis XVIII. by the way in which he spoke of him and of his Government. 'They have committed many faults,' said he, 'at Paris; but the King, more wise than his family, is generally esteemed. The army is more formidable than ever. Dangerous if employed within, it would be without faithful and terrible. The finances are re-established, and even flourishing. What is wanting is a Government: there are ministers, but not a ministry. But that defect may be supplied. Take it all in all, France is one of the European Powers the best prepared for war; and it would be less embarrassed than any of us if it were necessary to recommence it. You may reckon much and securely on her.' These words," continues M.. Thiers, "were more useful to us than the whole efforts of the French embassy; and being repeatedly urged at the time when the Russian and Prussian diplomatists had to come to a final decision, they exercised a singular influence."[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 609, 610.

72. Murat's abrupt decision, which causes a declaration of war against him.

The only one of the European questions which was not substantially settled when Lord Castlereagh left Vienna, was that of the King of Naples, as to which he deemed the decision too momentous to take it upon himself, without the direct authority of his Government. Louis XVIII., with whom he had a long interview on his way through Paris, returning to London, strongly impressed upon him the extreme danger of allowing that scheming adventurer to remain on the throne so near Buonaparte, in the agitated state of France and Italy; and the Duke of Wellington, before he left Vienna, had emphatically enforced the same opinion. The difficulty, as already noticed, was, that the Emperor Alexander, actuated by a chivalrous sense of honour, insisted that the whole provisions of the treaty of the 11th April 1814 should be carried out regarding him as well

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as Buonaparte, and that he had hitherto committed no overt acts which gave the Allies the right to hold themselves disengaged from the treaty, although they were in possession of abundant secret information of his hostile designs and preparations. Matters were in this state of suspense, awaiting the decision of the British Cabinet on the question whether he was to retain his throne or not, when he took a rash and premature step which at once furnished the Allies with a fair pretext for breaking with him. Having heard of the serious divisions between the Allied Powers on the question of Saxony, and being well informed by the Duc de Campo-Chiaro, his minister at the Congress, of the hostile designs which France and Austria were forming against him, he deemed it best at once to throw off the mask, and take advantage of what appeared to him the inevitable approaching rupture between the Powers assembled at Vienna to obtain, in return for promised support, a distinct guarantee of his throne. He accordingly sent to the Duc de Campo-Chiaro a note to be laid before the Congress recapitulating all his grievances, real or imaginary, against the assembled sovereigns: concluding with a demand for a categorical answer to the question whether he was at peace or at war with the two houses of Bourbon; and intimating that, if obliged to defend himself, he would require to make a passage through several Italian states by force.[1]

[1] Duke of Wellington to Lord Castlereagh, Feb. 9, 1815, MS.; and Thiers, xviii. 617.

73. Steps of the Allies against him.

Unfortunately for Murat this note, which had been written by him in consequence of information received six weeks before as to the divisions of the Allied Powers, arrived at Vienna at a time when they were all adjusted, and they were only waiting for a decent pretext for putting the last stroke to their arrangements by dethroning him. The information they had received, and letters they had intercepted, left no room for doubt as to what he was designing against them, and fully justified an immediate declaration of war. They were not slow in availing themselves of the pretext for doing so, which Murat's ill-advised

step afforded them.* When the Duc de Campo-Chiaro received this note, he saw at once how inopportune it would be to present it at present, and took it to M. de Metternich, offering, at the same time, to withhold its formal presentation. Metternich, however, rejoiced at finding the imprudence at length committed, for which he had been long anxiously looking, deemed it too important to be passed over, and communicated it to Lord Castlereagh, who had not yet set out, and the Duke of Wellington and M. de Talleyrand. They agreed that it should be treated as a virtual declaration of war, and answered by the concentration of 150,000 Austrian troops in Northern Italy. Orders to this effect were immediately despatched, and the assembling of the troops was already commenced when the intelligence arrived of the landing of Napoleon from Elba.[1]

[1] Thiers, xviii. 618, 619.

74. Abortive negotiation for a marriage between the Houses of Russia and France.

A very curious negotiation took place between France and Russia in the latter stages of the Congress of Vienna, which, although not immediately connected with Lord Castlereagh or his brother Sir Charles (now Lord) Stewart, deserves a place in any memoirs relating to the period. This was a proposal on the part of the Emperor Alexander of the hand of his sister, the Grand-duchess Anne, for the Duke de Berri, the heir-presumptive of the French monarchy. The Empress Dowager of Russia, who had very great influence in the counsels of the Czar, was strongly set on this alliance, which both promised to gratify her family pride by a connection with the most ancient reigning family in Europe, and to increase the influence and augment the strength of both empires. Count Pozzo di Borgo also, who was moved by the same views, gave the project the whole benefit of his able support. It, however,

* "Il n'avait fallu qu'attendre pour avoir un prétexte spécieux de se déclarer libre de tous les engagements contractés envers cet infortuné. Du reste les lettres saisies sur Lord Oxford, dont nous avons raconté l'arrestation, et d'autres papiers interceptés prouvaient suffisamment que *Murat avait la main dans tous les troubles qui se préparaient en Italie.* On avait donc de puissantes raisons à faire valoir auprès de ceux qui hésiteraient encore à se tenir pour dégagés."—THIERS, xviii. 617.

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came to nothing. The difficulty ostensibly put forward was the difference of religion, regarding which the Czar proposed the compromise that she should leave Russia, still belonging to the Greek Church, with liberty to become Catholic, if she was afterwards so inclined. It is probable that this would have been agreed to on the part of Louis XVIII. had not political considerations intervened to prevent it; but M. de Talleyrand, who held strongly by the secret treaty of 3d January, with Austria and France, gave it his most decided opposition, and, in a secret conference with Alexander, broke it off just before the Congress separated, upon the ostensible ground that, in the estimation of Louis XVIII., the difference of religion was an insurmountable objection. The Czar was deeply hurt by this refusal, as he had been by a similar result of a like proposal made by Ferdinand VII. for his sister, and which broke off on the same ground. It is not a little remarkable that, within a few years, a proposal of marriage between Napoleon and the Grand-duchess of Russia, and another between a similar princess and the Bourbon family, should both have terminated in refusals mortifying to the house of Romanzoff.*

The only question which remained to resolve was that

* "M. de Talleyrand s'était appliqué à éviter toute explication sur le mariage projeté, tant qu'il restait quelque chose à faire à Vienne. Cependant à la veille de la séparation générale il fut obligé de sortir de cette réserve. Alexandre en effet dans un dernier entretien lui dit avec une indifférence qui n'était qu'affectée: 'On me demande ma sœur, je ne veux pas disposer de sa main sans m'expliquer définitivement avec la cour de France, qui avait paru la désirer. Ma mère verrait ce mariage avec plaisir, pour moi je le trouverais fort honorable, mais je voudrais être fixé. J'ai fait des refus, et,' ajouta-t-il en souriant, avec un ton d'humilité qui lui coûtait peu, 'j'en ai essuyé aussi. Ferdinand VII. m'a demandé ma sœur, mais apprenant qu'elle était Grecque, il a retiré sa demande.' M. de Talleyrand, souriant à son tour, et sans montrer plus d'embarras que son auguste interlocuteur, lui répondit: 'La conduite de Sa Majesté Catholique doit vous révéler les embarras de Sa Majesté Très-Chrétienne.' Puis tournant en plaisanterie ce grave sujet, il fit entendre au Czar que le très-pieux Louis XVIII. se montrait inflexible sur la question de religion. Alexandre n'insista pas, et ne parut attacher aucune importance à une affaire qui pourtant ne laissa pas de le blesser profondément, car la Cour de Russie tenait beaucoup au mariage de la Grande-duchesse Anne avec M. le Duc de Berry."—THIERS, xviii. 624, 625.

of Parma; but it was beset with difficulties of no ordinary kind. On the one hand, it was difficult to find an answer to the warm instances of France and Spain, the ministers of which contended that, amidst the general restoration of the ancient sovereigns, the illustrious house of Parma should not be alone excepted. On the other hand, Alexander had, by the treaty of 11th April, stipulated that this duchy should be settled on the Empress Marie Louise, in liferent, and her son, the King of Rome, in fee; and not only did the known regard of the Czar to his personal honour render it certain that he would insist on the obligation being implemented, but it was not less certain that Austria, now interested in the question, would warmly support the same side. To escape the dilemma Metternich at first proposed that the Legations should be given to Marie Louise in exchange for Parma, which was to revert to the ancient family; but this project was rendered abortive by the determination of the Pope not to consent to the alienation of any part of the patrimony of St Peter. Metternich next proposed that Parma should be restored to the Queen of Etruria, and the principality of Lucca to Marie Louise, with a pension, one-half to be borne by France, and the other half by Austria; but, at her death, the principality, instead of descending to the King of Rome, to revert to the house of Tuscany. This arrangement was acquiesced in by the Cabinets of Paris and Madrid, but it broke down from the decided resistance of Marie Louise to parting with her own dowry, or the patrimony stipulated for her son. The Powers concerned were at a loss how to solve this difficulty, but at length a solution was found in the personal weight of Lord Castlereagh with Louis XVIII. That nobleman was to pass through Paris on his way back from Vienna to London,[1] and it was concerted between Metternich and him, without the privity of Talleyrand, that a compromise should be proposed by the British Minister to Louis XVIII. to the effect that the Duchy of Parma should in the mean time be settled on Marie Louise,

75. Resolution of the Parma question.

1 Lord Castlereagh to Lord Liverpool, Feb. 17, 1815, MS.; and Thiers, xviii. 620, 621.

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and at her death revert to the Queen of Etruria, who was then to give up Lucca to the Grand-duke of Tuscany.

76. His return to London through Paris.

Lord Castlereagh left Vienna on the 15th February, having before his departure had long conferences with the other plenipotentiaries, at which all the remaining points were adjusted. On this occasion he delivered to the Allied sovereigns the beautiful medals which the Prince Regent had ordered to be struck off in honour of the Congress. He reached Paris on the 23d, and immediately commenced the delicate negotiation concerning Parma, with which he was charged. He experienced at first some difficulty in consequence of the anxiety of the Bourbon family to exclude any of the Napoleon dynasty from a legitimate throne; but they soon yielded to the mingled firmness and suavity of the British diplomatist; and the compromise proposed was agreed to without change by the French Government. From Paris he continued his

March 3.

journey to Calais, and landed at Dover on the 3d March amidst the loud acclamations of an immense crowd of spectators. They might well be proud of their minister: he had conducted to a prosperous issue the most terrible war in which the country had ever been engaged, and concluded it by the most glorious peace which its statesmen had ever signed. He brought with him not only secure independence and glory to his country, but the acquisition of all the objects for which the war had been undertaken. Malta, the Ionian Islands, the Cape of Good Hope, the Mauritius, Trinidad, Demerara, the Bahama Isles, and many others, formed the trophies of a contest in which all that was abandoned by the victors was owing to their moderation in the hour of triumph. The London journals, on his arrival the next day in the metropolis, were loud in praise—not less loud than deserved—of the ability with which he had executed the important and delicate mission with which he had been charged.*

* "Never perhaps was man charged with a more delicate and more important mission, or possessed more advantages for executing it. With consummate

But while England was indulging in a legitimate pride at the glorious termination of the war, and doing justice to the statesman by whom it had been brought about, an event occurred, unexpected by all save the ministers of Louis XVIII., which threatened to undo it all, and again involve Europe in bloodshed and conflagration. On the 7th March, four days after Lord Castlereagh landed at Dover, information was received at Vienna from the consul at Leghorn, by whom it was transmitted, partly by telegraph, that Napoleon had set sail on the evening of 26th February from Elba with his Old Guard, about eight hundred in number; and the next day news arrived from Genoa that he had arrived on the 1st of March in the Gulf of San Juan, on the coast of Provence, where he had landed with his entire force without experiencing any opposition, and had set out for Grenoble by the mountain road on his way to Paris. Everything now would depend, according to the prophecy of Fouché, on the conduct of the first regular regiments he encountered on his march; and the event proved that he had rightly judged the tempers and feelings of the troops. The memorable event occurred on the road leading from Frejus to Grenoble, where he was met by a body of regular troops under General Labedoyère, who, at the sight of their ranks, and in a transport of enthusiasm, threw themselves at his feet. His progress thereafter was a continued triumph; and the telegraph announced successively that he had entered Grenoble, Lyons, and Paris.[1]

77. Return of Napoleon from Elba, March 3.

[1] Cap. i. 177, 182; Hard. xii. 477; Cast. Cor. x. 472 and MS.

Had a bomb exploded in one of the meetings of the assembled diplomatists at Vienna it could not have occasioned greater consternation than this intelligence. The

ability he combines all the graces of the most exquisite politeness. Moderate, but firm, he conceives laudable projects only, and executes them by honourable means. He is a statesman without guile, a courtier without falsehood. Such a man is a glory to his country; and if England is proud of a Nelson, of a Wellington, so ought she to be of having produced a Castlereagh."—*New Times, March* 4, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 23.

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78. Effect it produced on the Congress.

different dispositions of men clearly appeared on its receipt. "He is mad," said Pozzo di Borgo; "he will be hung up on the first tree." The Emperor Alexander, though sanguine of the result, judged the event more correctly. "It will prove a trifle," said he, "unless we regard it as such." Talleyrand, who knew what he had to expect if he fell into Napoleon's hands, was in an agony of terror, and evinced a pusillanimity which seriously damaged his character in the eyes of all who witnessed it.* But fortunately, in the midst of the universal tumult, there were some cool heads and intrepid hearts, which, boldly looking the danger in the face, adopted at once the measures calculated to arrest it. The Emperor Alexander, who had been luckily detained at Vienna beyond the time for which his departure had been fixed, was still there, and immediately had a long conference with M. de Metternich, the Duke of Wellington, and Lord Stewart.† They unanimously agreed to publish the declaration of 13th March 1815, which was signed by the representatives of Austria, Spain, France, England, Portugal, Russia, and Sweden, which set forth: "Napoleon Buonaparte is put beyond the pale of social and civil relations, and as enemy and disturber of the repose of the world, he is delivered over to public vengeance." Nothing additional required to be done to carry this resolution into effect: Lord Castlereagh's forethought had provided a year before for the very case which had occurred. The treaty of Chaumont of 25th March 1814, which bound Austria, England, Russia, and Prussia in an alliance offensive and defensive for twenty years, and stipulated that each of the contracting parties should furnish 150,000 men to serve the common cause, at once rose into activity, and formed the basis of the whole subsequent arrangements. Lord

* "Cet evènement d'effroi pour le plus grand mombre fit passer M. de Talleyrand d'une hauteur insultante à la plus honteuse pusillanimité."—HARDENBERG, *Mémoires*, xii. 475.

† Lord Castlereagh's brother, the object of this memoir, who had been raised to the peerage shortly after being appointed to the Embassy at Vienna.

Castlereagh immediately measured the full extent of the danger, and wrote to the Duke of Wellington at Vienna, enjoining the adoption, without a moment's delay, of the most vigorous measures, and sent authority to his chargé d'affaires, Lord Clancarty, at the same place, to sign a treaty binding Great Britain to pay a subsidy of £5,000,000 sterling, and £2,100,000 in lieu of part of the military force she was bound to produce by the treaty of Chaumont, as in the present year the native British troops that could be brought into the field would not exceed 50,000.*

* "You will see that we are preparing, as usual, to bear our part with the Continent in the good and great cause, which, if we remain united and in earnest, we shall bring to a glorious and secure conclusion, I doubt not. I know all your pecuniary wants, and you may rely on our doing our best; but the heavy charge of the last war, and the Commissariat debts in Spain and America, yet press upon us. I fear we shall be obliged to borrow this year from £35,000,000 to £40,000,000 to liquidate arrears, &c. We shall, nevertheless, make every effort to aid the Continent. I have authorised Lord Clancarty to sign an additional article to the Treaty of the 25th, binding the Prince Regent to supply £5,000,000 to the three Powers. We shall also give about £2,100,000 in lieu of deficiencies under our quota, which, in British troops, we shall not be able, in this campaign, to carry above 50,000 men, exclusive, however, of Hanoverians or Dutch. . . . The Duke writes to me in raptures of Gneisenau and your troops, and relies upon them as he does upon his own." —LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* PRINCE HARDENBERG, *April* 17, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 316, 317.

To the Duke of Wellington Lord Castlereagh wrote:—"If we are to undertake the job, we must leave nothing to chance. It must be done upon the largest scale. With Mayence, Luxemburg, and Lille, you start on solid grounds, and no fortresses in the rear to blockade as before. If Buonaparte could turn the tide, there is no calculating upon his plan; and we must always recollect that Poland, Saxony, and *much Jacobinism*, are in our rear.

"I wish you would turn in your mind the principles to be acted upon in France. The applying those you acted upon in the South to the force you will now command of all nations, is out of the question. The utmost we could attempt would be, to be honest ourselves, and this would only make our Allies more odious. My notion is, that France must pay the price of her own deliverance—that the King should consider the Allied troops—that every corps should be accompanied by a French ordonnateur, through whom all requisitions for forage and subsistence should be made; the value to be paid in *Bons*, the liquidation of which should be assured on a peace, either in whole, or in the greater proportion, at the expense of the French Government. Unless some system of this kind is agreed upon, the war will either degenerate, as it did last year, into an indiscriminate and destructive pillage, or *we* shall be bankrupts, and driven out of the field in three months. I know the difficulties of what I suggest; but the alternative in the less objectionable sense leads at once to impossibilities and ruin. Pray consider whether the territorial acquisitions of Austria must not be reduced into articles. I think she cannot

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79. Effect of Napoleon's return in concluding the Saxon question.

The first effect of the return of Napoleon from Elba, was to occasion an immediate and final settlement of the Saxon question. It has been already mentioned that this delicate question had been adjusted, so far as the sovereigns were concerned, before Lord Castlereagh left Vienna, and the portion to be ceded by Prussia agreed on. In pursuance of this concert, the King of Saxony was required to cede the territory thus settled by a formal deed to the King of Prussia; but he excused himself on the ground that he was a prisoner in the hands of the Allied Powers, and that any cession of territory made by him in such circumstances would be invalid. Upon this they invited him to come to Vienna, where he would be entirely at liberty; and in pursuance of the invitation,

Feb. 22. he set out on the 22d February from Frederichsfeld, where he was, and arrived at Presburg, in the Austrian dominions, on the 4th March, where Prince Metternich, M. de Talley-

March 8. rand, and the Duke of Wellington, waited on him on the 8th. They endeavoured to persuade the unfortunate monarch to resign himself to his fate, and sign the required concession; but they could not prevail on him to do so. He alleged that he might by violence be deprived of his dominions, but he would not be a voluntary party to their alienation. It is impossible to avoid feeling a certain admiration for a sovereign in misfortune; he could break but not bend; but in a worldly point of view, never was a refusal more unhappily timed. The intelligence of the landing of Napoleon in France had rendered his case hopeless: all jealousies and animosities were stilled, from the sense of the impending danger. Upon learning the King's continued refusal, the Congress passed a resolution, declaring that, "considering the manner in which the King of Saxony had reunited himself to the most cruel enemy of Germany, Prussia was put in possession of the portion of

rest her title merely upon the secret and very general article in the treaty of Paris."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to the* DUKE OF WELLINGTON, *March* 26, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 285, 286.

Saxony assigned to her, reserving to justify the step by an exposition of their grounds of complaint against him, in order that public opinion may not be misled on the subject." This resolution was immediately acted upon; and the district of Saxony, thus transferred, has ever since remained part of the Prussian dominions. The portion thus transferred amounted to a third of the inhabitants, but embraced nearly a half of the superficial territory of Saxony, leaving, however, its beautiful capital to the divided monarchy. Serious apprehensions were felt by the ministers of France, Austria, and England, that the discovery of the secret treaty of 3d January by Napoleon, in the archives of Paris, of which he would of course make the most, would sow dissension among the European Powers, by showing the Emperor Alexander the decisive steps which had been taken to restrain his ambition. But although it immediately appeared in the columns of the *Moniteur*, it had no such effect. The Czar had magnanimity enough to overlook the slight, and sense enough to see that it was not the time to open up fresh divisions, when Europe was again threatened with a restoration of the military domination under which it had so long groaned.[1] *

[1] Hard. xii. 474; Congrès de Vienne, vi. 212, 228.

80. Great preparations of the Allies for war with France.

The event proved the justice of Fouché's prognostications before Napoleon landed in the bay of Frejus; the defection of a single regiment drew after it that of the whole army; and the ex-Emperor's march to Paris was

* It is to be presumed, in the hurry of their departure, the Foreign Office at Paris has not been stripped by the King's ministers of any of its contents, and consequently that our secret treaty with France and Austria, as well as all Prince Talleyrand's correspondence, will fall into Buonaparte's hands. He will of course try to turn this to account, first in privately sowing discord; and, if he fails in this, he will expose the whole in the *Moniteur*. I have desired Sir Charles Stewart to ascertain how the fact stands, and leave it to your judgment to take such steps as you deem most suitable for counteracting any unfavourable impression. I flatter myself, after all he knew long since, it cannot produce any unfavourable impression upon the Emperor of Russia. He must feel assured that the whole grew out of differences now settled, *and a most indiscreet declaration of Prince Hardenberg's*. The treaty is, upon the face of it, purely defensive; and all our proceedings since have proved this beyond a doubt."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to the* DUKE OF WELLINGTON, *March* 27, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 286, 287.

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a continual triumph. Alarmed beyond expression at this unexpected result, Louis XVIII. sent his chancellor, M. D'Ambray, to qestion the ex-minister of police on the subject, on the 14th March, while the Emperor was still on his road, and a conversation took place between them, which is one of the most singular monuments on record, illustrative of the sagacity with which that arch-traitor, judging of others by himself, foresaw the future course of events.* Meanwhile, the most vigorous measures were going

* The account of this interview was sent by General Dumouriez to Lord Castlereagh; and the original in the General's handwriting is in the Castlereagh Papers. It is as follows :—

"*D'Ambray.*—Le Roi m'a chargé, Monsieur, de sçavoir votre opinion sur les progrès étonnants de Buonaparte, que parait secondé par la défection des troupes de ligne, et sur le parti qu'il y aurait à prendre pour arrêter ces progrès et cette insurrection.

"*Fouché:*—Il est *trop tard*, Monsieur; la révolution est inévitable. Buonaparte ne trouvera aucun obstacle ; il sera en Paris avant huit jours. Le Roi n'a qu'un parti à prendre c'est d'évacuer sans délai les Thuilleries, avec sa famille, sa maison, et sa cour, pour sauver une catastrophe épouvantable, qui serait le résultat du moindre délai.

"*D'Ambray.*—Mais, Monsieur, vous ne pensez donc pas aux grandes ressources qui restent au Roi, dans l'amour universel de la nation que ses vertus lui ont acquis, dans le courage des Princes et de la noblesse qui l'entourent, dans la force de sa maison militaire, dans le dévouement bien prononcé de quelques généraux et régiments de ligne restés fidèles, de la Garde Nationale de Paris, et des autres qui se rassemblent à Melun et présentent une armée déjà trois fois plus forte que les rébelles qui suivent Buonaparte.

"*Fouché.*—Je sais tout cela jusqu'au moindre détail. Ces ressources ne sont qu'illusoires. *Si le Roi pouvait compter sur six régiments de cavalerie, il ferait Buonaparte prisonnier.* Mais dès que cet homme paraîtra devant le camp de Melun, les troupes de ligne passeront sous ses étendards, les Gardes Nationales seront entrainés ou se dissiperont, les princes et les troupes de la maison ne trouveront leur salut que dans la fuite, et il entrera dans Paris du 21 au 22.

"*D'Ambray.*—Vous savez tout cela avec certitude! Comment? expliquez vous.

"*Fouché.*—Je vais vous parler avec la plus grande franchise. Je suis neutre, parceque on m'a rejetté quand je pouvais être utile, quand je pouvais prévenir les malheurs qui accablent inopinément le parti Royaliste, qui, par sa conduite imprudente, a préparé la chute du trône. Je ne suis point de la faction qui ramène Buonaparte au pouvoir suprème; au contraire, mon parti est très opposé à ce tyran féroce, dont je suis moi-même l'ennemi irréconciliable, parceque je sçais qu'il me déteste et veut me perdre. Mais il existe entre son parti et le notre des connexions assez étroites pour que rien qui se trame en sa faveur ne nous soit caché. Nous n'ignorons aucune de ses mesures; elles nous entraineront : il n'est plus tems de s'y opposer. La cause des Bourbons est perdue; il ne reste de ressource au Roi que la fuite. Notre conduite est conséquente. Toute résistance est inutile. Je vais même vous en convaincre

on at Vienna to meet and combat the danger.* A very important and unforeseen result followed, from the divisions between the Allied sovereigns relative to Poland and Saxony, which had so recently been appeased. *Their armies were on the war footing*, and in great part concentrated. An Anglo-Hanoverian army was collecting in the Low Countries; the Austrians had 100,000 men in Italy, and 200,000 in Bohemia and Moravia; Bavaria had 60,000 men ready for action, Prussia 160,000, and 200,000 Russians in Poland were ready to form the reserve of Europe in the crusade against Napoleon. Nor were the warlike preparations confined to the Allied Powers; the French army also had been put on the war footing; it had been raised from 130,000 to nearly 200,000 men. The partisans of Napoleon have carefully concealed that the great force, 130,000 strong, with which he invaded Flanders, and fought at Ligny and Waterloo, was raised, not by his efforts, but by Louis XVIII., and was intended when drawn together to combat, not the English, but the Russians by their side.[1] †

[1] Charras, Camp. de 1815, 18-20; Cap. i. 192.

par un autre traite de franchise, qui vous étonnera. *Nous nous joindrons au tyran.* Moi-même qu'il déteste, moi-même qui l'abhorre, je reprendrai sous lui le Ministère de la Police deux jours après son installation. Il ne peut pas se passer de moi: quand il se croira fort, il cherchera à nous perdre; mais nous ne lui en laisserons pas le tems. *D'ici à trois mois nous l'abbatrons.*"—*Manuscrit du* GÉNÉRAL DUMOURIEZ; *MS. Castlereagh Papers* (without date or address, but in the General's handwriting).

* "J'étois à Vienne au moment où la nouvelle de l'évasion de Buonaparte arriva. Je ne manquai de présager les suites dans toute leur étendue. L'Empereur en fut également convaincu dès le premier instant. Tout ce qu'on a fait à cet égard m'a paru juste et prudent. La guerre étant inévitable, il falloit prévenir l'ennemi, et en caractériser en même temps le motif et l'objet. Sans une explication franche et forte, l'adresse des Jacobins aurait toujours interprété notre conduite à leur manière: aujourd'hui ils sont obligé d'inventer; ils peuvent calomnier nos intentions; mais, du moins, ils ne sauraient dénaturer nos déclarations et nos démarches."—COUNT POZZO DI BORGO *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *April* 21, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 319.

† "C'est un grand bonheur, mylord, que cet évènement soit arrivé lorsque le Congrès avait pris une attitude tout-a-fait pacifique. Ceux qui, comme vous, y ont si essentiellement contribué, doivent bien s'applaudir de leurs efforts. Si Buonaparte et les Jacobins ont pu mettre l'Europe entière en allarmes, lorsque nous étions tous d'accord, qu'est ce qu'ils n'auraient pas fait si nous avions le malheur de nous déchirer: je ne pense à ce danger sans horreur. Il a cependant resulté un bien inattendu de nos divisions passagères:

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81. Their determination not to treat with Napoleon or any of his family. March 25.

The Allies, under the direction of the Emperor Alexander and Prince Metternich at Vienna, were not slow in making the best use of this immense mass of power. The declaration of 13th March was not allowed to remain a dead letter. Sir Charles (now Lord) Stewart, who, in the absence of Lord Castlereagh, wielded the whole influence of England, made the utmost efforts to array the Coalition in the most effective manner against France. On 25th March a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, was signed at Vienna, between Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain, which was based on the treaty of Chaumont, but even more stringent in its provisions for effecting the raising of a stupendous force. By it these Powers agreed to unite their forces against Buonaparte and his faction, in order to prevent him from again disturbing the peace of Europe. They bound themselves to furnish 180,000 men each for the prosecution of the war, of which a tenth was to be cavalry, and, if necessary, to draw forth their whole military forces of every description. By a secret treaty, signed the same day, it was solemnly stipulated that none of them should lay down their arms till they had effected the complete destruction of Napoleon. Within a fortnight after, it was acceded to by all the lesser Powers of Europe: the contingent of Bavaria was fixed at 60,000 men; that of Piedmont at 30,000; that of Hanover at 26,000. Altogether, the forces at the disposal of the Coalition amounted to the enormous number of 986,000 men, of whom no less than 740,000 might actually be brought into the field! After making every allowance for sick, absent, and ineffective

c'est l'état de nos armements. Jamais on a vu en Europe tant de forces aguerries et disciplinées, réunies pour un même but. Murat nous cause une division fâcheuse pour le moment. Si le Prince Metternich avait voulu écouter ou prévoir, s'il n'avait pas différé à se mettre en mesure, cette affaire serait terminée sans des grands sacrifices. Il faut l'aider du côté de Naples, dans le moment où le chef et les forces principales en sont éloignées, les Anglo-Siciliens pourraient aisément soulever la population."—COUNT POZZO DI BORGO *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Gand, April* 21, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 319.

men, it was calculated that 600,000 men might be brought to bear on the Rhine, the Alps, and the Flemish frontier early in June.* In a secret meeting, held at Vienna on the 31st March, it was agreed to divide this great force into three armies — the first of 265,000, consisting of Austrians, Russians, and Bavarians, on the Upper Rhine, under Schwartzenberg; the second of 150,000 Prussians, under Blucher, on the Lower Rhine; and the third, of equal amount, consisting of English, Hanoverians, and Belgians, in the Low Countries. With these armies, operations were to be commenced early in June, by which time it was expected that the Russian reserve, 170,000 strong, would have come up from Poland, and form a reserve to the armies entering France from the eastward.[1]

[1] Protocol, March 31; Congrès de Vienne, iv. 170; Schoel, Traité de Paix, xi. 213-215; Cap. i. 328-332.

The want of Lord Castlereagh's commanding character and manly eloquence had been severely felt in Parliament

* The composition of this force was as follows:—

| | |
|---|---|
| I. On Upper Rhine, under Schwartzenberg— | |
| Austrians, | 150,000 |
| Bavarians, | 65,000 |
| Wirtemberg, | 25,000 |
| Baden, | 16,000 |
| Hessians, | 8,000 |
| | 264,000 |
| II. On Lower Rhine, under Blucher, Prussians and Saxons, | 155,000 |
| III. Army of Flanders, under Wellington—English, Belgians, and Hanoverians, | 155,000 |
| IV. Russian reserve, under Barclay de Tolly, | 168,000 |
| Total, | 742,000 |

—PLOTHO, iv. 62, Appendix.

The plan ultimately adopted for the employment of these forces against France was as follows:—Schwartzenberg was to cross the Rhine in two columns, at Bâle and Manheim, which were to converge upon Chalons-sur-Marne. The Russians were to cross the same river lower down, and move by Metz on the same point. Kleist, with a corps of Prussians, was left to observe the fortresses on the Meuse, and connect Schwartzenberg with Blucher and Wellington. The two latter, uniting in the first instance, for the defence of the Low Countries, in Belgium and Rhenish Prussia, were to advance on Paris by the Laon road, regulating their march by the progress of the united Austrian and Russian army, on its way to the French capital, from Chalons. So different is the force of troops in the field and on paper, that Wellington's army actually consisted of only 95,000, and Blucher's of 110,000 men.

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82. Lord Castlereagh's speech against Napoleon. March 20.

during the winter, when the Government was singularly weak in effective debaters; and although the Cabinet was well aware of the value of his services at Vienna, they felt it to be absolutely necessary to recall him to his post in Parliament.* He had not been long there before the news arrived of Napoleon's landing at Cannes, followed shortly after by that of his unresisted march to Paris. Lord Castlereagh made good use of his time when he did arrive, for on the 20th March, on the occasion of a very interesting debate on the arrangements made at the Congress of Vienna, he took the opportunity to deliver a speech on the dangers with which the return of the Emperor to the throne of France was fraught, which was not only immediately verified by the event, but contains truths of lasting importance, and which the course of events, half a century after, have rendered prophetic.* Nor were

* "Whatever steps Great Britain may take, upon the issue of the contest which has thus unexpectedly been forced upon us depend all those blessings of peace and all those advantages of arrangement of which I have been speaking. Where is the man who can lay his hand upon his heart and say that, if the power of Buonaparte is re-established in France, any of those blessings which Europe was about to enjoy can be realised? Who will say, if he again *rules the destinies of France, that Europe can be tranquil, secure, or independent?* I consider that in the question now at issue in France is involved the more vital question, whether the world can return to that moral system by which the happiness and the interests of mankind were to be upheld, or whether we shall remain as we have been during the last twenty years, under the necessity of maintaining a system of military policy; *whether Europe shall in future present the spectacle of an assemblage of pacific or of armed nations?* Shall the nations of the world take up arms to destroy each other, or lay them down to promote each other's happiness? These are the questions to be decided by the result of the present contest in France,—questions of the deepest interest; for if, indeed, the authority of Buonaparte be restored, who can doubt that with him will be restored also that destructive military power?—if that military power be re-established in France, where, let me ask, must we look for peace and prosperity, unless we conquer it with our swords? . . . Let this country then, let France herself, reflect that upon the result of this new struggle must depend all our happiness or all our calamities. Upon the success of the family of Bourbon, who have bestowed upon France the greatest blessing which a country can receive—the blessing of peace—depends the important question for this country, whether we shall return to that natural and happy state of peace, or whether we shall continue the struggle against the military power of France, under the artificial system which such a contest has heretofore rendered, and would again render, necessary? Upon this great question there can be, I am sure, but one feeling; and I trust that Providence, conducting us through the remainder of the task which we have to perform, will ordain

Lord Castlereagh's efforts in preparing the means of withstanding the new and tremendous danger with which Great Britain was now threatened, confined to words and Parliamentary declamations. Acts important and decisive followed quickly after his orations. On the 6th April a message officially announced to both Houses of Parliament the events which had recently occurred in France as direct contraventions of the treaty of Paris, the communications entered into with the Allies on the subject, and the necessity of augmenting the military forces, by sea and land, which, during the last year, had been largely reduced. The address which, as usual on such occasions, was an echo of the message, was moved in the House of Lords by the Earl of Liverpool, and in the Commons by Lord Castlereagh; and so strongly were the members of both Houses impressed with the awful nature of the crisis, and the necessity of making a vigorous effort in the outset to meet it, that it was agreed to in the Commons without a dissenting voice, and in the House of Lords by a majority of 183—the numbers being 220 to 37. Lord Castlereagh concluded his speech, which was loudly cheered, with these words, "Some may think that an armed peace would be preferable to a state of war; but in determining that question, the danger must be fairly looked at. Good faith is the very reverse of the system of the party to whom we are opposed: his rule of conduct is self-interest, regardless of every other consideration; and whatever measures you adopt, or decision you arrive at, must rest on your own power, and not on that of reliance on the man."[1]

April 6.

[1] Parl. Deb. xxx. 356, 371, 418, 463.

83. Great preparations of Great Britain for the war with Napoleon.

The financial and military preparations made to meet the danger were not unworthy of these gallant sentiments. The income-tax, albeit felt as so sore a burden by the nation in consequence of the general fall of prices, was laid on again at ten per cent, by a majority of 125.

only one result."—LORD CASTLEREAGH'S *Speech, March* 20, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 58, 59.

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Eighteen millions sterling were voted for the navy, £24,000,000 for the army, besides £3,800,000 for the ordnance; by which means 207,000 regular soldiers and 80,000 militia were maintained, besides 340,000 local militia. To provide for these immense armaments loans to the amount of £39,000,000 were authorised and even treated for; and the total expenditure of the year reached £110,000,000, of which £13,000,000 was for the sinking fund, which, on the heroic principles of those days, was maintained even in that year of unexampled financial strait and difficulty. The subsidies to foreign Powers were no less than £11,000,000, of which Austria got £1,796,000; Russia, £3,241,000; and Prussia, £2,382,000. Such were Lord Castlereagh's preparations to meet the danger, and such the price which Great Britain paid for deliverance from Gallic invasion.[1]

1 Finance Accounts, 1816; Parl. Deb. xxxi. 795, 814; Treaty, April 30, 1815.

84. Lord Castlereagh's reception in the House of Commons, and his defence of the Treaty of Vienna. March 20.

When Lord Castlereagh first made his appearance in the House of Commons on his return from Vienna, the whole house spontaneously rose, and received him with such cheers as had never before been heard within the walls of Parliament. The grandeur of the mission on which he had been sent—that of establishing, by the moral weight and great services of Great Britain, the Continent on a new and more secure basis—the acknowledged ability with which he had discharged the duties with which he had been intrusted—the proud position in which his country stood, and in placing her in which he had had so large a share, overcame for the moment all other feelings, and caused the House to ring for some minutes with the acclamations of generous emotion. But great and glorious as the treaty was which he had so ably accomplished, there were parts of it which at the time, as since, were far from meeting with equally general approval, and they gave rise to frequent and acrimonious debates in the House of Commons, in which the leaders of the Opposition, Mr Whitbread, Mr Ponsonby, and Mr Tierney, particularly signalised themselves. On one of these occa-

sions, on 20th March 1815, Lord Castlereagh made an elaborate defence of the treaty of Vienna. The speech he delivered on that occasion is highly valuable, both as containing the views on which his foreign policy had been formed, and as being the best specimen of his parliamentary speaking; and as the report was corrected by himself, it is given in the material parts in the note below as one of the most valuable historical monuments of the age.[1]*

[1] Lond. Preface, Cast. Cor. i. 23, 24.

* "The question this night is not merely whether the particular interests of this country have been upheld and preserved by the administration to which I have the honour to belong at this perilous moment, but whether the councils of those sovereigns, upon whom our prospect of safety and tranquillity depend, have conducted themselves with integrity and wisdom during the course of the late important discussions.

"In this instance I beg to decline the shield which the honourable member (Mr Whitbread) has so kindly attempted to afford me. It is not my wish, whatever may be his, to be considered under the present circumstances, and after what has passed, as only an individual member of the Government. I disdain to shelter myself from any responsibility that ought to attach to the functions which I was commissioned to discharge, by being considered as an individual member only of the Councils of my Sovereign, all of whom were equally liable to such responsibility with myself. I should be ashamed presumptuously to arrogate to myself any responsibility not belonging to the office that I hold, or to assume any pre-eminence in those Councils to which I am proud to belong; but circumstanced as I have been, I feel that I could not accept the cover that has been offered without a degradation of my personal character. If I were to lead the House to suppose that, in the arduous transactions in which I have been engaged, I had at any time suffered the machine of Congress to stand still, in order to screen my conduct and determinations under the cover of previous instructions from my Government, when the public interests might suffer from delay, or that I had withheld that impulse which the influence of Great Britain, when applied with decision, was calculated to give, I should think that I had grossly betrayed the trust reposed in me. If it shall appear, as the honourable member has on this night, and on many others, contended, that the honour of the Crown has been sullied, and the good faith of the country broken, or her policy and interests disregarded, and her character degraded in the eyes of Europe, I desire to be considered alone responsible: I am ready alone to meet the attack and repel the charge.

"With regard to the slave trade, if foreign Powers have withstood those temptations held out for their conditional acceptance, while our exertions were continued without relaxation to bring them to a more favourable decision, it is fair for Parliament to conclude that there were serious difficulties in the way of those Governments immediately lending themselves to our wishes, and that we are bound to make allowance for the motives which induced them not to embark in what they held to be a dangerous experiment. With a view to the ultimate success of our own object, we ought not to disgust them by inconsiderate reproaches. Though the slave trade is not actually abolished, yet I have the satisfaction to announce that a great step has been made towards its suppression. The eight Powers who were parties to the Treaty of Paris have published a solemn declaration that it was fit that this detestable traffic should be

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85. Battle of Waterloo, and its effects on the Allied sovereigns.

It does not fall within the province of this work to give an account of the short campaign of 1815, or the glorious battle of Waterloo by which it was decided. The decisive event was announced in a short but characteristic holograph note by Marshal Blucher to Sir Charles (now Lord) Stewart at Vienna,* where it excited, as his Lordship expressed it, "the most unbounded enthusiasm among these

swept from the face of the earth. The claim which particular Powers who still traffic in slaves make for themselves is, that so much time shall be allowed for its discontinuance as is necessary for the welfare, security, and internal tranquillity of their respective dominions, and more especially of their colonies; and they pledge themselves to the world then to put an end to this nefarious traffic. I am happy to be able to congratulate the House on this important result. It will be obvious that no small step has been gained by inducing every Power in Europe, not only to pronounce in the general principle against the traffic in human beings, but to fix a period for its actual, early, and final extinction. Spain and Portugal, who have hitherto made the least progress towards the final accomplishment of the object, have declared eight years to be the utmost interval before it is abolished by them, and I do not despair that even this period may be reduced. With respect to France, although I have not yet been able to persuade the French Government to depart from their original determination on this subject, yet from all the intercourse which I have had with the minister of his most Christian Majesty, my belief is that they are sincerely desirous to put the earliest period to this trade which is consistent with the general opinion and prevailing prejudices of their own nation.

"With regard to the European Powers, if the assembled sovereigns had put forward a declaration to the effect that all the ancient governments of Europe, which time had swept away, should be recreated; that those rude and shapeless fabrics which had been thrown down, and had long ceased to exist in any tangible form, should be reconstructed, without any general or fixed principle for the reconstruction; if this was to be done without any regard to the corruptions that had grown up under those antiquated and ruinous institutions, without recollecting that those very Governments had produced the calamities by which Europe had been so long and severely tried, and which might in the end have the effect of recreating the dangers from which we have just escaped; if such a declaration had been issued, I should have felt ashamed that my country had belonged to a confederacy founded upon the principle of imbecility. The true question is, whether the deliberations and decisions of Congress were guided by an ascertained and worthy principle; *whether the basis they laid of a solid and lasting pacification* was or was not in itself sound; and whether for the attainment of any partial or selfish views any of the parties, but more especially this country, had betrayed the trust reposed in them by the confidence of Europe. It is upon these grounds, and these only, that I will argue the question.

"The whole of the negotiations lately held for the attainment of a general

* "My dear Friend,—The first battle has been fought, and the most glorious victory gained. The details will accompany this. I think we have pretty nearly finished Master Buonaparte's history. La Belle Alliance on the 19th, in the morning. I can write no more: all my limbs tremble; the exertion has been too much.—Ever yours, BLUCHER."—*Londonderry MS.*

great and warlike nations."* But before the decisive struggle arose, Lord Castlereagh was indefatigable in his efforts to keep together the Grand Alliance, and prepare the means of resisting the formidable enemy by whom they had again been threatened. Napoleon did his ut-



and lasting peace, founded on the principle that it was necessary to reconstruct the two great military monarchies of central Europe, which had been almost annihilated to accomplish the designs of the late ruler of France,—I mean Austria and Prussia. The object, as all must be aware, was to gain and permanently secure greater safety on both flanks of *the two States which were to form the immediate* bulwarks of Europe; and to give adequate power by means of the additional strength which they could supply to that State of Northern Germany which should wish the preservation of that portion of Europe. It was also desirable that a strong barrier should be interposed between the states of Italy and France, to prevent them from ever arraying themselves against each other. It was further wished that Switzerland should be re-established in her influence and independence, and that Germany might be again confederated in the same system to *render it an impregnable bulwark between the great States in the east and west of Europe.* The question is, Have these arrangements been calculated to produce such a state of things as all professed to be desirous of creating; or have particular powers been unjustly aggrandised; and have the potentates acted at the Congress, in the honest and faithful execution of the trust reposed in them, and of the general purpose which it was their interest to keep in view?

"With respect to Italy, the House will recollect that the charge is that this country, and her allies, have been guilty of a breach of faith towards Genoa, and failed in supporting the aspirations of the Italians after unity. Most solemnly do I declare that if there has been any breach of faith it is not on the part of our Government. The reproach and the blame, if there be any, must be heaped on me alone. Deeply as I should feel such a reproach, it is better that I should be accused, and suffer all the odium that should belong to this proceeding, than that the good faith of the country, which I conceive to be the very soul and principle of much of our influence with foreign powers, should be hazarded upon it. If, upon solid and substantial grounds, the good faith of England can be called in question in foreign countries, the life and soul which has animated the public affairs of this country is lost and dead, and we should lose that respect and esteem among foreign nations which, as much as our warlike prowess, has been the main source of our brilliant successes. But for this reliance on the character of England for unimpeachable good faith and

* "I beg to express my most hearty congratulations to your Lordship upon the glorious and most important victory of the 18th, the accounts of which have reached the Russian, Prussian, and Austrian Courts and generals here this evening. These all express themselves in the highest terms in praise of the Duke of Wellington, and of the distinguished bravery and discipline of the forces under his command, particularly the British; and indeed from these accounts it would appear that more intrepidity and greater talents in a general, or more bravery in soldiers, never were displayed. Lord Stewart met the Emperor of Russia at Prince Schwartzenberg's, who expressed the most rapturous joy at the victory, and on its being gained by the Duke of Wellington."—LORD CATHCART *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *June* 21, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 382.

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most to sow dissension and propagate distrust among the Allies; and with this view he sent Caulaincourt to London to propose separate terms of accommodation to Great Britain. Lord Castlereagh acknowledged the receipt of his letters, but added in his reply to the French minister

fidelity in her engagements, we never could have achieved the great results which we have actually done, and the Continental Powers know we have, for the liberty and independence of Europe.

"To a certain extent the facts alleged on this head are correctly stated. It is true that, at a period somewhat remote, before I was honoured with the seals of the Foreign Department, Government had received intelligence which induced them to believe that a spirit favourable to the general feeling of Europe animated Italy, and that there existed among its inhabitants a strong disposition to throw off the French yoke. We undoubtedly felt disposed to take advantage of those favourable symptoms, and to lend any assistance consistent with the maintenance of more important objects. That these dispositions had assumed any definite form—that the sovereign to be put on the throne, or the from of government to be established, was agreed on, I never heard. But whatever the dispositions were, it was evident that any effort to further them must be made by the people on the southern side of the Alps, because we had there no large disposable force at our command to second such efforts, and Austria, forced by the events of the war to retire, had then no footing in Italy.

"In point of fact, have the expectations raised with respect to Italy been realised? Never was so complete a disappointment—never were assurances so little fulfilled—never were professions so futile as those of the Italians have been. The expectations we had been led to form of assistance on the part of Italy have been falsified to such a degree that, while one-half of the armies of France was employed in a disastrous war in Spain, and the other half marched into Russia, and there destroyed, at the time when Italy was literally stripped of troops, in order to further the ambitious designs of the ruler of France, not a man rose in Italy, from one end of it to the other. Buonaparte at that time, when he had scarcely a soldier to maintain his authority there had it been disputed, possessed Italy in a state of perfect and implicit obedience. He had as complete possession of every part of the country as our Government has of York, or of the most loyal parts of this kingdom. The Italians did not raise an arm in their own cause; and for any benefits that have arisen from the suppression of that authority under which they had so long groaned, they were indebted to the Allies, and to them alone. His Majesty's Government, finding that the expectations held out of assistance on the part of Italy to the common cause were not in the slightest degree accomplished, made a change in the direction of the armament which they had collected to second their efforts, and instead it was sent to Spain.

"Equally ill founded is the argument that we should at this juncture, or in the subsequent congress, have erected all Italy into one separate kingdom, and thereby secured its support to the common cause. Such a course was altogether out of the question in the first place, because it afforded no prospects of success, and was not even demanded by the Italians themselves; and in the next, because it was inconsistent with our engagements with Austria, whose co-operation was indispensable to the success of the common cause of European independence. Does not the House recollect the period when Austria joined the great confederacy of the Allies, and when all were sensible that the rescue of

that the Prince Regent had refused to receive the letters of Napoleon, and directed them to be sent to the Congress, which was done by Lord Castlereagh the same day. So irritated was Napoleon by this decisive step, that he inserted in the *Moniteur* of 24th April an article, stating

enslaved Europe depended upon the determination of that great Power, which, by exerting itself at that moment on the side of independence, could put an end to that bondage, or, by continuing inactive, perhaps perpetuate, but certainly retard, the liberty and happiness of all surrounding nations? At such a moment would it have been the part of a wise policy to have detached Austria from our side, and continued her in a state of sullen inactivity, or possibly thrown her at once into the arms of the enemy? And yet, would not one or other of these effects have inevitably resulted, if without any hope of advantage from so doing, we had adopted the dream of Italian unity and independence? To have done so would have been to sacrifice a great and immediate practical support for a visionary and remote dream, never likely to be realised. It was not only our evident policy under such circumstances, to act as we have done, but it was the absolute necessity of the case. The assistance which Austria could at once bring into the field was not to be put in competition for a moment with an Italian insurrection, even if it had actually broken out, of which, however, there was never the smallest symptom. All men then felt that Austria was in truth the great hinge on which the fate of mankind must ultimately depend. No man acquainted with the state of Europe, either now, or at any former period, could support for a moment, with any show of reason, the position that our alliance with Austria admitted of the possibility of maintaining Italy independent as a separate kingdom. What was our engagement with Austria? Was it not that she should be restored to the same territorial importance in which she before stood in Italy? This engagement was wholly incompatible with the vision of Italian independence presented to the honourable member, and which he wishes to fasten upon this country as a matter of good faith, which, by her late decisions she has neglected and abandoned. There has been no breach of faith towards the Italians, for no engagement was made with them, and they were anything but deserving of such. The real breach of faith would have been, if we had acted otherwise; and if, after having brought Austria into the field by the promise of entire restoration of her former dominions, and gained the victory by her assistance, we had failed in awarding to her the promised return.

"With respect to the charge of breach of faith so strongly insisted on in the particular case of the Genoese, by annexing them to Piedmont, instead of restoring their separate existence, as Lord William Bentinck had announced, of course I should have been glad if the proclamation issued to the Genoese had been more cautiously worded, considering the use which has been made of it. I should have been glad if it had been so worded that there could not be two opinions regarding it, and it had distinctly warned the Genoese, as no doubt was the meaning of the person who put it forth, that the government which he then restored was only to exist provisionally, and until the decision of the Allied Powers was known as to any alterations or modifications which they might think it right to make. But admitting this, I contend, that, to those who view this instrument fairly and candidly, without prejudice on one side or the other, it must appear perfectly clear upon the face of it that nothing more was or could be meant but a provisional arrangement. In the very pre-

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that the people of London were so indignant at Lord Castlereagh at resisting his efforts to re-establish peace, that they had broken into and plundered his house—a statement in which there was not a particle of truth. Lord Castlereagh's views were fully explained in a debate

amble of the Proclamation, Lord William Bentinck declares that he re-establishes the old government, not because he has authority to do so, but because he thinks it most consistent with the general plans and purposes of the Allied Powers. He revives the old government in the mean time; but that act can never take from the Allies their inherent power of deciding for themselves what those principles and purposes are, and in what way they are to be applied in any particular instance. An envoy from the Genoese waited on me at Paris to communicate the views of the Genoese on this subject. I was quite explicit with him. I told him that so far from Lord William Bentinck having had authority to restore their old form of government, *he had positive orders to the contrary.* I endeavoured to explain to him why it could only have been a provisional government that was intended, and why Lord William could not be understood to revive it permanently. I even put it to the minister of the Genoese whether in truth they were deceived by it, and he admitted, what is undoubtedly the fact, that they never were deceived upon the subject from the first moment to the present; that they always understood that what Lord William Bentinck gave them was a provisional government, and nothing more. Whatever use may have been made of this proclamation at home to bring an accusation of breach of good faith against the British Government, or whatever use may have been made of it abroad, with the more venial view of establishing a claim on the good offices of this country, I am confident that from the time the British army came before the place to the time when I saw their envoy in Paris, the Genoese were never for one moment deceived as to the probability of their ultimate annexation to Piedmont.

"Everybody knows that Genoa is most important as a military position; that it is, in fact, the most important military possession in the north of Italy; and that more depends upon holding that post than upon the retention of almost any other place in the whole peninsula. Assuredly this consideration was not and ought not to have been lost sight of in deciding upon this question; and I apprehend that, whether their determination be right or wrong, at least none of the sovereigns or other ministers can be charged with improper motives in this case; for never could there be any decision less open to the imputation of improper inducements than the decision with respect to this city. As far as this country was peculiarly concerned, I have no hesitation in saying, that if we had not pursued that generous and noble line of policy which all the Powers laid down for themselves, the separate interests of Great Britain might no doubt have been promoted by the re-establishment of an insulated commercial republic like Genoa in that situation: and be it remembered that throughout these negotiations the Genoese have been invariably willing to unite themselves with England; our ships were to be allowed to enter with every commercial facility; and, if we would have consented to their union with us, they would, I believe, have willingly entered into it. But had we been guided by these distinct and unworthy views of present advantage, the Allied Powers of the Continent would certainly have had reason to complain that we were pursuing our own commercial speculations, and depart-

on 28th April, when he said in reply to the assertion of the moderation of the French Emperor, "Can it be supposed that, if Napoleon were again at the head of 400,000 men, he would feel any scruple at getting rid of a Lucien or a Fouché, if they stood in the way of his designs? No

ing from the great principles by which we had from the beginning professed to have been actuated.

"There was not in fact a single Power which had an immediate or separate interest in deciding the fate of Genoa in the way that has been done. France, indeed, had an obvious motive to press the decision of the point the other way; but, during the whole negotiation, France made no attempt to interpose, and conducted herself throughout with unimpeachable honour and integrity. The motive, the *sole motive*, which led to the incorporation of Genoa with Piedmont, was the sincere conviction of *the necessity of a barrier between France and Italy*, which ought to be made effectual on the side of Piedmont. So strongly was this felt, that the annexation was determined on before the sovereigns left Paris. The object was to commit the defences of the Alps, and of the great road leading round them by the Gulf of Genoa, between France and Italy, to the same Power to whom it had formerly been intrusted, and to make *that a respectable Power, capable of making good the defence.* It was on that principle that the question relating to Genoa was discussed, and decided upon by the Allied Powers. It was not resolved upon because any particular Power had unworthy or sordid views regarding it, nor from any interest or feeling in favour of the King of Sardinia, but solely to make him, as far as was practicable or necessary, the means of promoting the general safety and independence of Europe.

"With respect to the two most important features of the late negotiation, I mean the reconstruction of the Austrian and Prussian monarchies—I call them the most important features, because every man must be sensible that, until they were restored to their former rank and importance, there would remain a great blank in Europe; that, until they were re-established in adequate strength, there could be no bulwark against any future encroachments of France; that, until they were replaced upon their original footing, Europe was not herself, and was deprived of the main pillars of her security—I say with respect to the Austrian and Prussian monarchies, I have the satisfaction to state that they have now, by the decision of the Allies, regained their former rank and weight in the scale of Europe, and that, too, in a mode which relieves them from many of the calumnies which have been heaped upon them. I can affirm with perfect confidence that these Powers have neither done nor consented to anything which gives ground for calling in question their moderation.

"The principle laid down was to take the possessions of these two monarchies as they stood in 1805, and reconstruct them to that level. The House will see that in fixing upon this line, Austria at least did not choose a time which betrayed a spirit of aggrandisement. By taking 1805, instead of 1792, when the revolutionary war began, she put out of the question her possessions in the Netherlands. It is true that since that time she has gained the state of Venice; but even taking that into view, she was 2,000,000 weaker in population than in 1792. The period to Prussia was that which immediately preceded her spoliation by the French Emperor. Nor have the principles thus laid down been departed from in the territorial arrangements with respect to

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one will dare to say that his return is an act of the French nation. No one will deny that this last revolution is a purely military act. The army will probably never be in a condition to render its old master the same services as it could have done under other circumstances. The

the states which have since been made; on the contrary, they have been carried out to the very letter. Neither of these Powers has, by the decision of the Congress, obtained any accession of the least importance, beyond what they could demand under the strict application of the principle for their re-establishment which they had at first laid down. Though some of the territorial acquisitions of Prussia may lie wider and be somewhat upon a more extended scale than formerly, yet it will appear, upon the most accurate calculation, that the utmost she has obtained, beyond what she had in 1805, is 50,000 souls; while Austria, from the slight alteration of her territorial possessions, has not gained more than 300,000 or 400,000 new subjects. So much for the spirit of aggrandisement which they have shown; and upon the whole, I assert without hesitation that nothing can be more unfounded than the imputations cast upon those Powers.

"The honourable gentleman has arraigned, in the severest manner, the conduct of the Congress in regard to Saxony, which he calls a base and intolerable design to annex Saxony to Prussia. I should perhaps agree with him in thinking that it would not be wise or proper to give the *whole* of Saxony to Prussia; and I have never disguised or concealed my opinion on that subject. I have no hesitation in admitting that I was one of the ministers of the Congress who differed from the Prussian plenipotentiary and others upon this point; and I was one of the persons who felt himself entitled at Vienna to contend, in the strongest manner, against the incorporation of the *whole* of Saxony with the Prussian dominions. I felt, indeed, that more intolerable injustice might be done in other directions; but so strong were the sentiments of the British Government upon this subject, and so serious the remonstrances made, that the settlement now existing in Saxony was ultimately obtained by a sacrifice, in some degree, of the interests of Holland and Hanover.

"But let me not be misunderstood. I was never one of those who contested the point upon the principle now maintained, that it must, in any case, be inconsistent with the duties of the Powers of Europe assembled at Vienna, even with the consent of the nation itself, to annex the whole of Saxony to Prussia. I never opposed it on the ground of abstract right; I broadly and advisedly deny any assertions that have been made regarding my conduct or words in this respect. I always contended, as I now do, that the right of conquest, under the qualifications which I shall presently state, was a right which gave the conqueror a perfect warrant to annex the whole of a subjugated country to another state. I take no pleasure in stating anything which may appear harsh to the illustrious sovereign who now in happiness reigns, and I trust will long reign over his subjects. But I must be permitted to argue that never was the principle of conquest more justifiably exercisable than in the case of Saxony. Her conduct furnished, as the House knows, an instance of former unwarrantable aggrandisement, and of the most persevering resistance to the Allies. The King drew the consequences upon himself by his own acts. His great exertions against the common cause of the other European Powers are well known; and although opportunities were afforded him to join his forces to those of the Allies, he thought fit, on his own view of the

French nation is now reduced to silence by the bayonet. At any rate, whatever difference of opinion there may be on the great question, whether it would be more prudent to allow the power which at this moment governs France to subsist, or to stifle it in its birth, it is evidently a

subject, to continue to employ his efforts in behalf of France. He did this after he had been placed in circumstances where he might with ease have withdrawn himself from among the supporters of Buonaparte, if he had not thought that perseverance in the cause of the man who had given him his crown was the best mode of preserving his dominions. Saxony was a conquered country in the strictest sense of the word; and although it is true that the Saxon army did, on the third day of the battle of Leipsic, join the Allies, and perhaps decided the victory, yet until that moment, when the troops acted for themselves, the whole resources of the country had been employed against the common cause of Germany.

"But although the annexation of the whole of Saxony to Prussia would have been perfectly justifiable, it was a different question whether that entire annexation was necessary for the restoration of Prussia, or in itself expedient or becoming. Now, as there was ground to presume that Prussia could be reinstated without the sacrifice at least of the whole of Saxony, I was strongly of opinion that to push the abstract right of conquest to extremity against Saxony, would be doing mischief to Prussia, instead of promoting her ultimate and permanent advantage. I thought that the general opinion of mankind would have revolted at such a proceeding, and that Prussia would be injured in the general estimation of Europe by being the principal gainer by such an act. She had made, it is true, unexampled efforts in the general cause, and deserved a reward; but not such as amounted to the total absorption of a neighbouring power. The proclamation of Prince Repnin, saying that he took possession of the whole of Saxony as for the King of Prussia, was indeed known to me; but I understood, as did the Austrian minister, that it was a provisional occupation only which was intended. The first knowledge I obtained on the subject was conveyed in a copy of the proclamation sent from the neighbourhood of Dresden. I lost no time in carrying it to the Prussian minister, and from him to the minister of the Emperor of Russia. The former assured me he had neither seen nor heard of it till that moment; the latter was equally uninformed regarding it; and they concurred in opinion that the proceeding was wholly unauthorised. Indeed I afterwards received in writing a distinct and formal declaration to that effect from the Prussian minister, Prince Hardenberg.

"With respect to Poland, I am sure the House will be gratified to learn that the situation of its brave people will be considerably ameliorated by the new arrangements. There was undoubtedly a strong feeling in the country upon the subject of independence and a separate government; *and as far as I was able I exerted myself to attain that object.* This, however, was not the wish of all. It was found to be inconsistent with the views of several of the great Powers of Europe, and, of course, such a project could not be carried into execution without complete and general consent. I may venture to say, however, that in the Congress there is but one feeling, that the whole country, *as Poland*, should be governed under one system. Whatever may be the general arrangements agreed on, I have reason to believe that the principle of the government in general will be far more congenial with the feelings and

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duty of the utmost necessity to take measures of precaution."[1]

Upon the taking of Paris, and the commencement of negotiations for a renewed treaty of peace with the restored Bourbon family, Lord Castlereagh returned to Paris, in order to conduct in person the important negotiations then pending for the settlement of the affairs of Europe,

[1] Parl. Deb. xxxi. 627; Moniteur, April 24; Cast. Cor. i. 60, 61.

wishes of the Poles than when they were placed under different masters from those to whom they will in future be considered to belong. The nation will be relieved from those local difficulties which attached even to their principal duties and avocations, and upon the whole will be ruled in a spirit of liberality befitting the feelings of the times. That portion which will form the Duchy of Warsaw will be under the sceptre of a different prince, and a system established, according to which the people shall be governed as Poles, with the rights and privileges which ought to belong to them.

"In supporting the views and objects with which I was specially intrusted, as more immediately affecting the interests of Great Britain, I felt throughout that I was not called on to uphold separate views or projects, but that in all such points our Allies were equally concerned, and that, in truth, our own welfare and theirs were so intimately connected, that they could not be separated. I have particularly in view in these observations the case of *Holland*. It was certainly important that France should not possess undivided that continuity of naval means and resources afforded by the extensive line of coast over which she had the sole control, from the Texel to the Pyrenees. I felt that if, at *any time, we were to enter into a new struggle with France, we should contend at a very great disadvantage with the very extensive means and resources which she would then possess,* and which might be rendered most injurious to our navy. If a division of these resources was important to ourselves, it was of not less importance to the other Powers of Europe, that a balance of the naval advantages in each country should be kept up, and that France should not be allowed to retain those facilities for gaining a naval preponderance, which such a line of coast unbroken and undivided would afford. In discussing this point, I am certain that all felt that I was not contending for any separate interests of Great Britain; and that in acceding to the junction of Belgium and Holland, they were giving their approbation to a great, if not the greatest improvement, in the general system of Europe effected in modern times. It was by no means a concession to the Prince of Orange, or to Great Britain, which was intended. It was a principle of policy to which, from the first moment of its mention, they listened willingly, and in which they agreed to co-operate cheerfully and cordially. They held it to be an object of equal concern to them all, that the territories formerly belonging to Austria in the Netherlands should be annexed to Holland. From the first, they regarded such a measure necessary in the future construction of Europe, as a means of increasing the strength of Holland, and giving her a weight in the Continental scale, to which she was entitled, but had hitherto not enjoyed. By this determination the Prince of Orange will possess territories equalled by few, and surpassed by none, in Europe, for facilities in regard to industry, wealth, and commerce, or the high character in war which its inhabitants have always enjoyed. The people of the Netherlands will now become a nation of great importance in the balance of power, and have great weight

so cruelly unhinged by the return of Napoleon and overthrow of Louis XVIII. He arrived in the French capital on the 7th July, and one of his first aims was to restrain the indignation of Blucher and rapacity of the Prussians, who threatened to lay on Paris a contribution of 110,000,000 francs (£4,500,000), besides insisting on equipments for 110,000 men, and were beginning to mine

86. Return of Lord Castlereagh to Paris, July 7.

when properly called out. The sovereigns of Europe have a high opinion of the Prince of Orange, and feel that no monarch in Europe has displayed greater perseverance in his arduous duties, or more liberality towards his subjects. They all hope that his country, now so strong by nature and art, will at all times *be capable of opposing an effectual resistance, at least till the arrival of such aid as the natural interest of the Powers would urge them to supply.* Hanover and her fate were not at first so much connected with this country as they might have been; but the augmentation of territory which, by the recent negotiations she has received, has contributed to render her connection with Great Britain more permanent and less costly, by giving her more extensive means of internal defence and resistance. Placed in juxtaposition with Holland, having a line of territory adjoining for a distance of 150 miles, and including the port of Embden in her new possessions, there can be no doubt that these circumstances will give her increased security and importance.

"As to Norway, the Congress saw no cause to alter the arrangement already made as to its annexation to Sweden. This, as the House well knew, was part of the treaty between Alexander and the Crown Prince of Sweden, entered into at Abo in September 1812, and by which Russia, at the time of its greatest need, obtained that assistance by being enabled to withdraw its troops from Finland, without which it must have sunk in the conflict. The Emperor Alexander, with the scrupulous fidelity to his engagements which forms so honourable a feature in his character, considers his honour pledged to that arrangement; and by treaty with the Crown Prince, Great Britain is not less bound by it. It is true the Crown Prince has not shown that alacrity in following up the war which might have been desired, but that was not by the Powers chiefly concerned deemed a sufficient ground for departing from this obligation. Nor are political considerations of great weight wanting to recommend and justify the same course. Denmark had taken her part throughout the conflict so decidedly with France that it could not with reason complain if it underwent the fate of its ally; and it will not escape observation that Great Britain had a remote, but what might prove very material interest, in the new arrangement. Denmark, from its geographical position, was necessarily in the general case under the influence of Russia; and therefore it was very material for the naval interests of England that Sweden should, as much as possible, be rendered independent, and both shores of the Sound hindered from falling under the same power. This would inevitably be the result of Sweden and Norway remaining separate, and the latter forming part of the Danish dominions.

"With respect to Spain, and the negotiations with that Power, now so unhappily engaged in a mortal struggle with her colonies, I positively deny that there has been evinced the slightest intention to infringe that neutrality which we have observed, and are bound to maintain, between Spain and her revolted

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the bridge of Jena in order to blow it up. Lord Castlereagh lost not a moment in concerting measures with the Duke of Wellington to prevent this irreparable act of severity.*

87. Lord Castlereagh's efforts to effect the restoration of the works of art from Paris.

A very important duty devolved on the diplomatists who were charged with conducting the negotiations in Paris, after the battle of Waterloo, and that was the adjudication on the numerous claims for restitution of the works of art plundered by the Revolutionary and Imperial armies during the many years that they were engaged in the conquest of the European monarchies. Had the Allies been actuated by the rapacious spirit of the conquering French democracy, they would have made short work of

South American colonies. The whole of his Majesty's Cabinet feel that it is their duty to use the whole force of Government to keep up that neutrality, and to prevent this country being rendered the channel for the transmission of arms to the insurgent colonies. We feel it to be a paramount duty to abstain from any act which may directly or indirectly impair the Spanish monarchy. By such conduct we should be setting ourselves up as judges between sovereigns and subjects, when in truth we have no right whatever to interfere one way or another between them. Whatever may be the result of that contest, and whatever the wishes of the honourable gentleman opposite for the independence of the South Americans, the House I am persuaded must be sensible that instead of interfering on either side, it is much better to allow a sovereign and his subjects to settle their own differences, and arrange their own affairs. Be the value of the honourable member's remarks on this subject what it may, never shall I respect opinions given for the encouragement of subjects in rebellion against their lawful sovereign; and I never shall hear them without thinking that the person delivering them travels far beyond that which, as a good subject, he owes to his sovereign." The House agreed to an address approving of the treaty without a division.—*Parliamentary Debates*, xxx. 292-303, and *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 24-56.

* "The immediate difficulty is now to keep Blucher and the Prussians within any bounds towards this town. They have notified to the Duke to-day that they had laid on the city of Paris a contribution of 110,000,000 francs, and equipments for 110,000 men; and they are at this moment mining the bridge of Jena with the view of blowing it up. The Duke has written to urge them at least to suspend all measures of this nature till the arrival of the sovereigns; and we propose to-morrow morning to pay the Marshal a visit at St Cloud together, to stop if possible these measures of arbitrary and unconcerted severity. The King sent for the Duke and me this evening to the Tuileries, principally on this point. We found him in a state of great emotion and exultation at the reception he had met with from his subjects, which appears to have been even more animated than on his former entrance. Indeed, during the long audience to which we were admitted, it was almost impossible to converse, so loud were the shouts of the people in the Tuileries gardens, which were full of people though it was then dark."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *July* 8, 1815 *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 419, 420.

all these questions by simply demanding restitution of them all, and at the same time exacting the surrender of the finest works of art belonging to France itself, to adorn the galleries of England and Prussia, who had achieved the conquest of the Great Nation. But such a course would have been abhorrent to the principles on which they had conducted the contest, which were not to imitate the bad example of their opponents, but to restore things to their former situation, so far as consistent with due security against the repetition of such disasters in future times. Lord Castlereagh, accordingly, warmly supported the restitution of the works of art to the states from which they had been reft, but he was equally resolute to make no further demand upon the French, and allow their own works to remain undisturbed in their vanquished capital. The Duke of Wellington strongly supported the same views, and it was in consequence determined to make the restitution complete, but not to extend it to any spoliation of the French monuments of art themselves. This determination led to a general lodging of claims against the French Government for restitution of objects of *vertu* which had been carried off, or repayment of contributions levied and exactions made, during the years when the French armies were conquering Europe. Their amount, if not authenticated by official documents, would exceed belief. From the *Castlereagh Correspondence* it appears that the amount thus robbed and carried off by the French armies before the treaty of Campo-Formio, in 1798, amounted to 9,126,684,581 francs, or £366,000,000 sterling! As this was before the campaigns of Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, Wagram, and the Spanish Peninsula, so prolific in plunder, it may reasonably be concluded that this sum, great as it is, was not more *than a third* of what was extracted from Europe by the French armies during the Revolutionary wars! In other words, the plunder realised by the French Emperor, marshals, generals, and soldiers, beyond all doubt in twenty years exceeded a thousand millions sterling—a sum, from

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the difference in the value of money, equal to at least fifteen hundred millions in this country! Nothing more is required to explain the warm enthusiasm which this system excited in the nation which profited by this plunder, and the universal exasperation it produced among those who suffered under it.*

88. Final treaty of Vienna. June 9.

The fearful interlude of the return of Napoleon made no change, to the honour of the Allies be it said, in the terms on which the treaty of Vienna, as agreed to at the

* "*Précis des* Contributions, Requisitions, &c., levées, depuis le commencement de la Révolution jusqu'au Consulat de Buonaparte, par les Français dans les Pays étrangers, tirées des Mémoires et Proclamations Officiales.

| | Livres. |
|---|---|
| Territoire de l'Empereur d'Autriche, | 1,450,250,000 |
| ——— du Roi de Prusse, | 7,020,000 |
| Les Provinces Unies de la Hollande, | 835,445,000 |
| Territoires divers entre la Moselle, la Meuse, et le Rhin, | 111,280,000 |
| L'Electorat de Treves, | 6,120,000 |
| Palatinat du Rhin, | 12,462,000 |
| Deux-Ponts, | 4,455,000 |
| Duché de Berg, | 2,464,000 |
| Cercle de Souabe, | 24,248,418 |
| Empire Allemagne, | 500,463,375 |
| Wurtemberg, | 13,031,000 |
| Souabe, | 27,510,000 |
| Bavière, | 16,970,000 |
| Baden, | 3,245,000 |
| Territoire Milanais, ou République Cisalpine, | 294,000,000 |
| Sardaigne, | 5,000,000,000 |
| Modène, | 30,400,000 |
| Lucques, | 5,000,000 |
| Parme, | 3,850,000 |
| Naples, | 7,150,000 |
| Gènes, | 4,000,000 |
| Toscane, | 258,600,000 |
| Etats Héréditaires de l'Empereur, | 10,100,000 |
| Etats de l'Eglise (par Buonaparte), | 156,750,000 |
| Rome (par Buonaparte), | 47,525,000 |
| Venise (par Buonaparte), | 194,045,788 |
| Espagne, | 30,000,000 |
| Portugal, | 36,000,000 |
| Suisse, | 24,300,000 |
| Hambourg, | 7,000,000 |
| Brême et Lubeck, | 3,000,000 |
| Livres de France, | 9,126,684,581" |

—*Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 411, 412.†

† "Jusqu'à la paix de Campo-Formio et l'expédition en Egypte cette somme immense est entrée en France en *bon métal réel*, dont la moitie est possédée par les maréchaux, généraux, &c., l'autre moitié par les ministres, &c."

Congress, was concluded. It was finally signed on the 9th June, and its conditions, apart from some insignificant details, were the same as those which had been arranged before Lord Castlereagh left Vienna in the middle of February.* The share of Saxony falling to Prussia was reduced to a territory containing 800,000 souls. The remainder, with its beautiful capital, remained with the King of Saxony. Prussia's territories on the left bank of the Rhine were augmented to 1,100,000 souls; and she ceded to Hanover on the right bank some 250,000 souls. Norway remained annexed to Sweden, and the Grand-duchy of Warsaw (without the Duchy of Posen, which was annexed to Prussia) was erected into a separate kingdom with a representative government, of which the Emperor of Russia was King. Austria ceded all her claims to the Low Countries to Holland, with whom they were incorporated into a separate kingdom, under the title of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which was settled on the Prince of Orange. Austria regained all her possessions in Italy, including Lombardy, as far as the Ticino, and the whole Venetian territories ceded to her by Napoleon at the treaty of Campo-Formio in 1797. The Swiss territories were augmented by the Valais, Geneva with its territories, and the principality of Neufchatel, which formed so many new cantons. The German Confederation was established, and the most minute regulations for its defence adopted. Genoa was united to Piedmont, the Grand-duke of Tuscany restored to his dominions, Parma secured to the Empress Marie Louise, and the entire kingdom of the two Sicilies restored to their ancient kings. New regulations were made for the free navigation of the Rhine and other great rivers in Germany, and the much coveted declaration against the slave trade introduced into the treaty and rendered part of the

* Its leading provisions had been previously determined in separate treaties between Russia, Prussia, and Austria, on the 21st April; between Prussia and Saxony on the 18th May; and between Holland and the four Allied Powers on the 31st May.

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public law of Europe. The only matter of real regret, so far as Great Britain was concerned, was that the noble island of Java, itself a kingdom, now yielding £2,500,000 revenue, was restored to Holland. It is impossible to defend this imprudent piece of generosity; but it was part of the magnanimous policy of Lord Castlereagh, who was above all selfish considerations for himself or his country, and was desirous of upholding that moral influence which, in the midst of the general scramble for the spoils of the French Empire, had been enjoyed by this country, from being in the rare position of having everything to give and nothing to ask.[1]

[1] See Treaties, April 21, May 18 and 31, 1815; Congrès de Vienne, vi. 123-130; Schoell, xi. 257, 294; and Genl. Treaty in Parl. Deb. xxxii. 72, 114.

89. Review of the Russians in the plain of Vertus.

Sept. 10.

Sir Charles (now Lord) Stewart, came to Paris with the Allied sovereigns after the occupation of that capital by the Allied forces, and took an active part both in the military pageants and diplomatic negotiations by which that memorable period was distinguished. Among the former was the great review of the Russian army 160,000 strong, of whom 28,000 were cavalry, with 540 guns. Such a scene had never before been seen in Europe, and perhaps will never be seen again. The Duke of Wellington and Sir Henry Hardinge were present, besides Lord Stewart and the Emperors of Russia and Austria, King of Prussia, and all the lesser potentates of Germany, with Prince Schwartzenberg, and nearly the whole Allied generals. Many ladies of high rank graced the spectacle, among whom, from England, were Ladies Castlereagh, Combermere, Grantham, Mrs Arbuthnot, Miss Fitzclarence, and many others. The review was magnificent in the very highest degree, and fortunately we possess a description of it by Lord Stewart, written at the moment with that graphic power for which he was so remarkable.* The Duke of Wellington, Sir Lowrie

* "On the arrival of the sovereigns at the spot fixed upon for them, the ensign was unfurled, and a salvo of guns announced their presence. The whole Russian army there assembled was seen drawn up in three lines, extending as far as the eye could reach. The sun glittered on their arms, and on the drawn sabres of the cavalry, to a distance that almost appeared imaginary. The eye

Cole, Sir Henry Hardinge, and several other generals came to Lord Stewart's in the evening full of admiration at the spectacle they had just witnessed. "Well, Charles," said the Duke, "you and I never saw such a sight before, and never shall again; the precision of the movements of those troops was more like the arrangements of a theatre than those of such an army. I never saw anything like it. But still I think my little army would move round them in any direction while they were effecting a single change,"—an opinion in which all around him concurred.[1]

[1] Lond. 334, 335.

90. Memoir from foreign artists in Rome to Lord Castlereagh.

A very interesting memoir was presented to Lord Castlereagh while the negotiations for a final settlement were pending at Paris, praying for the restitution of all the works of art carried off by the French during their conquests in Italy to the Eternal City. It was signed by Thorwaldsen, Gmelin, De Potter, Keller, Irvine, and twenty-eight other foreign artists of eminence then residing at Rome; and, although not subscribed by Canova, who, being an Italian by birth, was excluded from the category, it received his warmest and most effective support. It proceeded on the ground that the carrying off of these

had scarcely time to comprehend so vast a spectacle, when a single gun fired from the height on which we stood was the signal for three hurrahs from the troops. Even at this distant day these hurrahs sound freshly in my ears, as they came less and less loudly from the divisions of ten thousand, each as they stood in the lines. A second gun gave the signal for a general salute. The cannon and musketry began at once, and the fire ran along the three extended lines, showing more distinctly than anything else could have done, the vast space they occupied, by the distant flashes and retiring sound of the musketry. We rode down the hill, and the Russians broke from their lines into grand columns of regiments, and no one but a soldier can conceive the beauty of this grand simultaneous change. A spot was then fixed on for these masses to march by the sovereigns; and the Emperor of Russia, putting himself at the head of the leading regiments, thus formed in column, marched past and saluted the Emperor of Austria and King of Prussia; then placing himself by their side, saw the rest of the army march by. The whole of the day was only sufficient to give time for a re-formation into line and an opening of ranks, along which the cavalcade of monarchs and their immense suite rode. The Emperor of Russia appeared greatly occupied with the Duke of Wellington (who was then our ambassador at Paris), as if anxious for his opinion of what was passing before them, and his whole attention was given to him when not taken up with his fair companions who rode on both his flanks. Thus closed this day, never to be forgotten by those who witnessed the grand military display it presented."—MARQUESS LONDONDERRY, *War in Germany*, 1813-1814, 334, 335.

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monuments of art was a piece of barbarity on the part of the French generals, of which even their own artists, who profited by it, had been ashamed; that Rome had become, in process of ages, a sort of refuge for the fine arts, where their professors, of whatever nation or tongue, met on terms of amity and peace—where the passions and divisions of the world were unfelt, and the love of the ideal had come to supersede the attractions of the real; and that it would be a lasting injury to the arts, and with them to the progress of civilisation, if the immortal monuments of genius which had been carried away were not restored to their sacred emporium, but suffered to remain in far distant lands, whither they had been carried by the arms of conquest, and deposited among a people little qualified to profit by them.* Lord Castlereagh

* "Rome a été considéré depuis une longue série d'années comme le centre des arts et comme leur meilleure école. Les Français eux-mêmes, après avoir ramassé de tout côté ce que les arts offrent de plus précieux, et après l'avoir entassé dans leur capitale, n'ont pu cependant se dispenser d'envoyer leurs élèves pensionnaires du Gouvernement à Rome, persuadés que ce n'est que là qu'ils pouvaient atteindre à la perfection. Plusieurs artistes Françaises ont partagé l'amertume que la transplantation de ces objets, quasi indigènes à Rome sur un sol étranger, a causée au reste de l'Europe. Ils ont élevé publiquement leur voix contre une barbarie, usitée, il est vrai, sous les anciens Romains, mais qu'alors déjà Cicéron foudroyait de son éloquence. Ajoutons encore que les artistes les plus fameux actuellement en France datent leur perfection d'un tems antérieur à cette rapine, et que la plupart d'entre eux a étudié à Rome.

"Cette cité éternelle, par un concours de circonstances unique dans l'histoire du monde, est devenue la capitale des arts pour tous les peuples. La nature et les arts s'y prêtent les mains pour leur perfectionnement mutuel. Tout ce qui entoure ses habitans coopère à élever l'imagination et le cœur, à former le goût de l'amateur, à renforcer le génie créateur de l'artiste. Ce dernier, libre des entraves qui compriment son essor ailleurs et surtout en France, par l'esprit de système et de mode, et l'égarent par l'appât d'un succès du moment vers une manière fausse et mesquine, saisit ici la nature avec originalité, et n'aspire qu'à ce qui dans les arts est le seul vrai et le seul immuable.

"C'est à Rome qu'un saint recueillement, et une simplicité de vie vraiment patriarchale, en sauvant l'artiste des distractions, du tumulte de Paris, lui assurent une jouissance pûre et tranquille des arts. Aussi n'existe-t-il ici que pour eux. Tout autre intérêt s'évanouit, si ce n'est celui de l'émulation avec les grands modèles qu'il a journellement et à chaque pas sous ses yeux, et avec cette foule d'artistes de toutes les nations qui s'élancent avec lui dans la même carrière.

"Mais ce n'est pas l'artiste seul qui profitera de cette restitution des monumens antiques au siège central des arts. L'amateur y gagnera également. Ce qu'il étoit forcé naguères de considérer sous des rapports et sous des entours peu favorables, il le vera rétabli sur son sol classique et primitif, dans un cadre

warmly supported this petition, and very much by his exertions the restoration was made complete, and the Apollo Belvidere, the Laocoon, the Fighting Gladiator, the Transfiguration, and Last Communion of St Jerome, were restored to their former seats in the Vatican. For this important service to the arts and to Rome he afterwards received the warmest thanks of the Supreme Pontiff.

91. Removal of Napoleon to St Helena.

The military revolution which immediately followed the return of Napoleon from Elba, and the imminent danger to which Europe in consequence had been exposed, rendered it evident to all that, in the final pacification which was to be made, it was absolutely necessary to provide effectually both against a repetition of a similar irruption on the part of the ex-Emperor, and against the military force of France remaining so powerful as to afford it, if attempted, a like chance of success. How to do this most effectually was a different question, and gave rise to much division of opinion among the Allies. Lord Castlereagh, as already mentioned, had in 1814 strongly opposed the settlement of Napoleon in Elba, and Sir Charles Stewart had pointed out its dangers with a precision which subsequent events had rendered prophetic. Taught by this example, all were now agreed that he must be removed from the dangerous vicinity of France; but there was not the same unanimity as to where he should now be placed. The Canary Islands were seriously thought of, and Dumbarton Castle, a fortress perched on the summit of a high insulated rock in Scotland, was proposed. Lord Castlereagh strongly supported his removal to St Helena, which was at length agreed to. The instructions which he prepared for his detention there, and which were fully acted upon, were to give him the title of General, not Emperor, to prevent the growth of dangerous illusions in his mind, and to give

propre à en relever les beautés, et avec ce repos d'esprit nécessaire pour jouir des arts et des antiquités—but qui ordinairement conduit seul les voyageurs à Rome."—*Mémorial des Artistes Etrangers à Rome à* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *Rome*, 15 *Juillet* 1815, *MS.*, and *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 462, 463.

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him every comfort and accommodation which was consistent with his secure custody. That the latter strictness was not uncalled-for is proved by the fact that, during the six subsequent years that he remained there, several plans were, by the admission of his warmest partisans, formed for his escape, some of which were very near succeeding. And that the former humane principle was fully acted upon is obvious from the facts, admitted by the same authorities, that he was subjected during his residence on the island to no personal restraint or indignity; that he was at liberty to ride when he pleased, attended only at a distance by a mounted guard; that he had saddle-horses and books in profusion, and was accompanied by all the friends, both male and female, who chose to share his exile; that his table was equal to that of any duke in England, and Burgundy and Champagne his daily beverages; and that the expense of the establishment kept up for, or on his account, by the British Government was £400,000 a-year.[1*]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxxv. 1158, 1159.

92. Negotiations for a final peace.

But it was not enough to have secured the person and guarded against the future invasions of the ex-Emperor; it was indispensable also to take such securities from France itself as might prevent a repetition of assaults upon Europe by its revolutionary inhabitants. Different plans were proposed to accomplish this object, which were anxiously considered by Lord Liverpool, Lord Castlereagh, and the Duke of Wellington. One was to dismantle the whole frontier fortresses of France except a few of the strongest, and cede them to the Allies. Another to detach Alsace, Lorraine, and Picardy from it, and restore them to the German Powers to whom they had originally belonged. A third, to occupy the frontier fortresses for a fixed period, either three or five years. The whole of them were

* Lord Castlereagh's instructions as to the custody of Napoleon were in these words:—"To treat Napoleon with all the respect and consideration due to his rank, but under such precautions as should render his escape a matter of impossibility." The total cost of his table which the English Government paid was £12,000 a-year.—*Parliamentary Debates*, xxxv. 1158. 1159.

strongly impressed with the idea that, in Lord Liverpool's words, "the continuance of the King's authority and Government, after the evacuation of the country by the Allies, must be very problematical; and if his Government should *then be overturned, and be followed by a Jacobin or Revolutionary system, though not that of Buonaparte,* what will be thought of those who, with France at their mercy, had left that country entire in point of territory, enriched by all the plunder of Italy, Germany, and Flanders, and had provided no additional security for the rest of Europe, though, in the instance of the Low Countries, such security is admitted to be indispensably necessary?"[1]*

[1] Lord Liverpool to Lord Castlereagh, July 28, 1815; Cast. Cor. x. 447.

93. Enormous demands of the Allied Powers.

The difficulty of coming to a final and satisfactory arrangement on this subject, and providing, without irrecoverably alienating France, for the future security of Europe, was much enhanced by the magnitude of the demands of the Allied Powers, particularly Prussia,

* Lord Liverpool's opinion was early pronounced in favour of the occupation of the fortresses for a limited number of years rather than dismantling them. "With regard," said he, "to the two alternatives of dismantling the French fortresses, or their occupation for a given number of years by the Allied Powers, there appears to us to be no question which of these propositions is the most advantageous to Europe, and even to France. In the first place, the dismantling the fortresses has rarely ever been completely effected. The works are partially destroyed, and may be repaired for a small part of the expense at which they were originally constructed. In the second place, though dismantling the fortresses on the frontier of France would uncover that country, expose it for a time to invasion, an advantage as far as it goes, it would not materially protect neighbouring countries which had no fortresses; and the contest, if it should arise, would depend in that case upon which Power would bring into the field the superior army. Whereas, if the French fortresses were occupied by the Allied Powers till such time as a barrier could be created by the Allies, they would have the advantage of the security of the French frontier till such time as they had been enabled to create one of their own. In the third place, the occupation of the French frontier by the Allies, to be restored at a given period to the King and his legitimate successors, would be some security for the continuance of his Government; whereas the dismantling the fortresses could not be productive, at least in anything like the same degree, of such an advantage. If, therefore, the principle of security ought to be the rule of our conduct, the option between these alternatives is clear. We do not feel that we should discharge our duty, if we did not urge this opinion with all possible earnestness, and desire you to urge it upon the Allies."—LORD LIVERPOOL *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *July* 28, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 446.

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Belgium, and Bavaria, who had the greatest injuries to revenge, and dangers to apprehend, both as regards territory to be ceded by France, and indemnities to be paid by that Power. The latter soon swelled to an enormous amount, which, even supposing they were in some degree exaggerated, gave a frightful idea of the extent to which systematic robbery and spoliation had been carried by the French armies. They amounted to above £1,200,000,000 sterling. The claims of Hamburg alone, a city at that time containing only 80,000 inhabitants, and impoverished to the last degree by the blockade during the war, amounted to £140,000—a sum, from the difference in the value of money, equal to at least £250,000 in British money. So enormous were the demands, and so obvious the inability of France to discharge them, that the Emperor Alexander, who had never forgiven the resistance made to his views on Poland by the Western States, and was very desirous of popularity in France, under the name of mediating between the contending Powers, took the part of the French in a way which at first excited the apprehension of the British Cabinet.* These concurring circumstances caused the negotiation to be protracted much beyond the period originally contemplated, and which was the more unexpected that at its close no less than 800,000 Allied troops were in possession of the

* "We are not at all surprised at the different shades of opinion which subsist amongst the Allied Powers as to the measures which it may be proper to adopt respecting the frontier of France. It is quite natural that the Powers bordering on France should look to their own security in some permanent reduction of the territory of that country. It is quite intelligible, likewise, that the Emperor of Russia should be desirous of being *considered as a protector of the French nation*; but this disposition, on the part of his Imperial Majesty, should be kept within reasonable bounds. He should recollect that those who are near to France, and consequently in the post of danger, have the deepest interest in the issue of the contest. And, though it may be very proper that he should so far act the part of a mediator as to keep down extravagant and unreasonable pretensions, he ought not to sacrifice what may be necessary for the security of his Allies to the pretensions of the French nation, particularly as that nation has never acted upon those principles of permanent territorial integrity with respect to other countries, when the fortune of war has placed the power in its own hands."—LORD LIVERPOOL *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *July* 28, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 445.

French territory, where they were, with the exception of the English, fed and maintained at the expense of the conquered territory, the inhabitants of which were incapable of making any, even the smallest resistance, while its army was almost entirely disbanded. Lord Castlereagh wrote and transmitted to his Cabinet, on the 17th August,* a

* "I quite concur with the remark contained in your last letter, that the true interests of Great Britain are much more identified with those of Austria and Prussia in the existing crisis, than with those of Russia; but I must at the same time observe, that both these courts require to be narrowly watched at the present moment, with respect to the mode in which they pursue their particular views, in order that we may not be involved in a course of policy in which Great Britain has no principle of common interest with them, but the reverse. The first point is, that I much suspect neither Austria nor Prussia, and certainly none of the smaller Powers, have any sincere desire to bring the present state of things to a speedy termination. So long as they can feed, clothe, and pay their armies at the expense of France, and put English subsidies into their pockets besides, which nothing can deprive them of, previous to 1st April 1816, but the actual conclusion of a treaty withFrance, you cannot suppose they will be in a *great hurry* to come to a final settlement, since the war may be said to have closed. . . . The Prussians have not only brought an entire new corps of 40,000 men forward—much to the annoyance of the King of the Netherlands, on whom they have been feeding, by the way—but they have now reinforcements to an equal amount in full march, to fill up all their other corps, making their numbers in France, according to their own returns, 200,000 men, for which they now draw rations. . . . The Prussian minister of finance, Bulow, yesterday told me that he did not calculate the Allied force now in France lower than 900,000 men; and their expense, including forage and waste, at less than 3 livres per man per day, which is about £112,000 a-day, or £36,000,000 a-year, exclusive of pay and clothing, the latter being provided by distinct requisitions, the former by the revenue of the departments occupied. To judge of the effect of the invasion in a financial point of view upon France, to this must be added the final contribution to be demanded, which, from all I hear and observe, is not likely to fall short of 600,000,000 (£24,000,000); and if to this you add the charge of 100,000 men who are to occupy for a number of years the intended position in France, you will probably be of opinion that the pressure is likely to be as heavy, in a pecuniary shape, as the country can be expected quietly to submit to. . . .

"With respect to the fortresses proposed to be erected, you reason the justice of throwing upon France the expense of providing those defences, which her position and conduct render indispensable to the security of the neighbouring states. Austria and Prussia state the justice as strongly and preferably in favour of being indemnified for the expenses of the war, and for former contributions levied upon them by France. It is quite clear that France cannot meet all these demands; that the charge upon her must be limited in amount; and that it will be a question amongst the Allies, in appropriating this fund, which pretension is to give way. . . . It is, in truth, a question much more between us and our Allies, in which, as I foresaw before I left England, we should have to contend upon grounds of remote precaution, against the immediate pressure of avarice and poverty.

"Much to my surprise, in discussion with Prince Metternich on this sub-

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detailed and most able account of the state of the negotiations, and the reasons adduced on both sides, which throws an important light on the difficulties with which he was surrounded, and the views which in the end swayed the British Government. At length, after a long delay, and no small difficulty, the heads of an arrange-

ject, I received not only a concurrence, but a considerable degree of support from the Russian minister; and he has since told me that the Emperor will agree to my proposition of appropriating one-third of the whole contribution to fortifications, which, considering the remote interest Russia has in this arrangement, is a very liberal proceeding on his Imperial Majesty's part. . . . The more I wish the alternative, the more I am impressed with the wisdom of what the Duke of Wellington states upon this subject in his letter to me, when he says he deems the possession of a certain number of French fortresses for an extended period of time, in itself preferable to the actual cession of the same places; and for this obvious reason, that the one is compatible with French connection, the other leads to unite all Frenchmen against us, or rather against the Power that shall be found in possession of their spoils; and as the King of the Netherlands would probably be the first to be attacked, we have more reason to weigh well the course to be pursued.

"When I state that the temporary occupation is not incompatible with preserving a useful influence in France, I do it from knowing that the King and his ministers do not wish to see France without foreign troops; that they admit the Allies cannot leave their troops in France, without the security of a certain number of their fortresses. My belief and hope is, if the arrangement is made with some attention to the feelings and interests of the country, that the King, his Government, and the loyal party in France, will ally themselves with you; and that thus sustained, the King will be able gradually to establish his authority, which, if accomplished, is valuable beyond all other securities we can acquire. If he fails, we shall not have to reproach ourselves with having precipitated his fall, and we shall have full time to take our precautions. If, on the contrary, we push things now to an extremity, we leave the King no resource in the eyes of his own people but to disavow us; and once committed against us in sentiment, he will be obliged soon either to lead the nation into war himself, *or possibly be set aside to make way for some more bold and enterprising competitor.* The whole of this view of the question turns upon a conviction that the King's cause in France is far from hopeless, if well conducted, and that the European alliance can be made powerfully instrumental to his support, if our securities are framed in such a manner as not to be ultimately hostile to France, after she shall have given *protracted proofs of having ceased to be a revolutionary state.* . . .

"I have no doubt, that in the prevailing temper, in England as well as in Germany, the Cabinet ought to instruct the Duke of Wellington not to look to secure a fortified place the more or the less, which seldom tells much in the contest of nations, but to confer with the other Powers how we can best reduce the power of France, and most effectually disqualify her *from making again the attempt to assail Europe.* I have no doubt the middle line would be most popular, and that in extorting the permanent cession of one or two fortresses of great name, our labours would carry with them an *eclat* which is not likely to attend them according to the course we recommend. *But it is not our business to collect trophies, but to try if we can bring back the world to peace-*

ment were come to between him and Prince Nesselrode, which formed the basis of the treaty which followed, and was signed on 20th November.*

94. Terms on which peace is at length concluded. Nov. 20.

Lord Liverpool was exceedingly anxious that in addition to the fortresses designed by the Duke of Wellington for temporary occupation, Strasburg and Lille should be demolished;† and the Cabinets of Vienna and Berlin secretly insisted that Lorraine, Alsace, Franche-Comté, and French Flanders, should be ceded to Austria and Prussia, and form part of the Germany Confederacy. It was

*ful habits.* I do not believe this to be compatible with any attempt now materially and permanently to affect the territorial character of France, as settled by the Peace of Paris. Neither do I think it a clear case (if we can, by *imposing a strait waistcoat upon that Power* for a number of years, restore her to ordinary habits, and weighing the *extraordinary growth of other states in latter times, and especially of Russia*) that France, even with her existing dimensions, may not be found a useful, rather than a dangerous member of the European system. You have now all the materials before you; you know the Duke of Wellington's sentiments and my own; and if you wish us to alter the view we have taken of the question, or have to make any change in the instructions given me on leaving England, there is no time to be lost."—LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* LORD LIVERPOOL, *August* 17, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 485-491.

* This agreement was in the following terms:—

"1. Occupation des places désignées par le Duc de Wellington pour cinq années.

"2. Cession de Landau, comme enclave de l'Allemagne.

"3. Cession à la Suisse, ou démolition de Huningue.

"4. Restitution au Roi de Sardaigne de la partie de la Savoye réunie à la France par la paix de Paris, contre la cession de sa part, pour la rectification des frontières de Genève.

"5. Restitution des districts détachés des Pays Bas par la paix de Paris.

"6. Contribution équivalente à une année de revenu de la France, savoir, six cent millions de francs.

"7. Comprendre dans cette contribution les cinquante millions exigés actuellement, et le montant des objets d'équippement qui ont été fournis.

"8. Employer le tiers de cette contribution à la construction de quelques points fortifiés en Belgique et dans le midi de l'Allemagne.

"9. La contribution sera payable dans trois ans."—*Memorandum by* PRINCE NESSELRODE, *August* 24, 1815; *Castlereagh Correspondence*, x. 498.

† "You will understand me as not bringing forward the dismantling of Lille and Strasburg as a *sine qua non*, but as wishing it to be urged with all the weight which we feel is due to it; and, considering how very short our propositions fall of the Austrian and Prussian *projets*, I cannot but entertain a confident hope that, when the French Government are aware, as they must be, of the extent of sacrifice which would have been demanded from them, if it had not been for the moderation of Great Britain and Russia, they will not feel it possible to make any serious resistance to a concession of this nature."—LORD LIVERPOOL *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH, *August* 23, 1815; *Cast. Cor.* x. 496.

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with no small difficulty that Lord Castlereagh, the Duke of Wellington, and Prince Nesselrode, withstood these demands, and they did so on the ground that such a partition of France would unite every heart and hand in the country against the Government, and render the preservation of peace, the great object of all their efforts, impossible. By their united efforts, the demands of the German Powers were at length overruled, and peace was concluded with France on terms more favourable than, after so dreadful an overthrow, could have been expected. By this treaty the territory of France was reduced to its exact limits in 1790, by which the whole addition left to it by the treaty of 1814 was swept away, except the little territory of the Venaisin, the first conquest of the Revolution. Versoix, with a small adjacent territory, was ceded to the canton of Geneva; but the fortress of Huningen, a standing menace to Switzerland, was to be demolished. The contribution laid on France for the expenses of the war, was fixed at 700,000,000 francs (£28,000,000), in addition to which an army of 150,000 men, under the Duke of Wellington, formed of 30,000 each from Great Britain, Austria, Russia, Prussia, and the lesser Powers of Germany, was to retain possession, during five years, of the chief frontier fortresses of France, from Condé to Fort Louis, including Valenciennes, Cambray, Quesnoy, Maubeuge, and Landrecy. This great force was to be maintained entirely at the expense of the French Government, which for five years would amount to 250,000,000 francs (£10,000,000), making in all £38,000,000 to be paid by France under this treaty.* By the advice of Lord Castlereagh, and with the entire concurrence of the Cabinet, Great Britain surrendered the whole portion of this indemnity accruing to her, amounting to nearly £5,000,000, to aid in forming a barrier against France in the Low Countries.[1]

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[1] See Treaty in Martens, i. 682; and Schoel, xi. 501, 518.

* The French Government was to pay 50,000,000 francs a-year for the pay, equipment, &c., of the Allied troops; but it was *besides* to furnish them *in kind* with their whole provisions, forage, lodging, and fuel. This would probably amount to as much more.—*See* SCHOEL, xi. 510.

95. Retrospect of Lord Castlereagh's foreign policy.

The treaties of Vienna consummated the foreign policy of Lord Castlereagh, and afford a convenient opportunity for a rapid review of their principles and effects. The period of nearly half a century which has since elapsed, fraught as it has been with the most important events, both foreign and domestic, has thrown a broad and steady light on the views of international rights and policy on which it was founded. It was vehemently decried at the time by the Liberal party, both at home and on the Continent—by the first, because it was deemed too favourable to despotic power, and too little encouraging to popular movements and inclinations; and by the last, because it had defeated the great democratic effort of the European states, and established an alliance of the Conservative Powers which threatened for a long period, if not for ever, to restrain its advances. That it had both these effects for a considerable time is indeed certain; but yet neither was intended by him, and neither formed the principal object to which his policy was directed. It was the *maintenance of the national independence*, to the support of which his early life had been devoted, that during his whole career constituted his main object. He resisted the democratic movement, both at home and abroad, because he saw that the hostility of its leaders always had been, and he foresaw always would be, in the end directed against this country. He inclined to the legitimate monarchies, and succeeded at last, by great exertions, in arraying them in a firm league for mutual protection and the prevention of the desolating effects of separate warfare. He did so, not because he was inclined to arbitrary principles, or desirous of supporting arbitrary governments, but because he foresaw that it was by the democratic Powers that the peace of Europe was likely in future to be disturbed and the independence of Great Britain threatened, and that it was by an alliance with the legitimate monarchies alone that either could be successfully maintained.

The annals of Europe during the twenty years which immediately succeeded the first French Revolution too

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clearly vindicated these opinions. In the outset that event was not merely regarded with no disfavour, but carried with it the warmest and nearly unanimous sympathy of the British people. To see, and, if they can effect it, render, all other nations as free as themselves, has ever been the warmest wish of the English; and, in the outset, they invariably regard any nation insurgent against its government, as their natural allies. So it was with the first French Revolution; so it was with the last. Even Mr Pitt and his Cabinet regarded the first convulsion, in its early stages, with favour; they stood aloof, when France was pierced to the heart by the Duke of Brunswick's invasion in 1792, and when nothing was wanting but a declaration of war from England to determine the contest at once in favour of Austria and Prussia. It was with deep regret, "and like," as Lord Malmesbury said, "a conscientious man being forced into a duel," that they were in the succeeding year drawn into the war. But the events which rapidly succeeded soon dispelled this amiable and natural delusion, and revealed the painful truth that every revolutionary state on the Continent is no sooner established than it allies itself, *not with England, but with France*, if under a revolutionary government, and, instead of forming a support to Great Britain, constitutes a direct addition to the power of its enemies. The Batavian, Cisalpine, Roman, and Parthenopeian Republics were not only conquered and organised, but cordially united their forces with those of France; and when Lord Castlereagh succeeded to the helm, in 1807, he found the whole of Europe, under the banners of revolution, arrayed in a vast league against this country. There are many instances in the history of England of revolutionary powers imploring its aid to establish their independence—there is not one of any of them in return ever rendering her any assistance. On the contrary, in the darkest period of the war, when Britain, the last asylum of freedom, was endangered, America, after every cause of complaint had been removed by the repeal of the Orders

96. Proof which the Revolutionary annals afforded of the dangers to England from democracy.

in Council, united her arms with those of France against this country.*

97. Confirmation of the same principles from subsequent experience.

If the subsequent history of Europe since Lord Castlereagh's death is considered, still more ample proof will be found of the truth of his principle, that every revolutionary movement on the Continent, if successful, is an addition to the power of France; if unsuccessful, of Russia; and that it is difficult to say by which the independence of Great Britain is most seriously menaced. The Grand Alliance, which he with so much labour constructed, overthrew the revolutionary principle in the person of its chosen champion, and gave Europe forty years of peace, unbroken save by the democratic outbreaks and triumphs of 1830 and 1848. But both of these convulsions *signally advanced the power of France*, and the last so effectually that we have ever since been constantly engaged in, or under preparation for, serious war. The Revolution of 1830 partitioned the kingdom of the Netherlands; restored Antwerp, erected at so vast a cost for our subjugation, virtually to the rule of France; and established revolutionary dynasties, of course in the French interest, in Spain and Portugal. That of 1848 re-established in a few years the proscribed Napoleonic dynasty on the throne of France; and that speedily led to the Crimean war, which irrecoverably broke up the alliance of Russia, Austria, and England, and resulted in the Italian contest, which ended in the annexation of Savoy and Nice to the French empire, and the extension of French influence through the intervention of revolutionary movements over the whole Italian peninsula. France has regained the *prestige* and power which she had lost during the years 1814 and 1815 from the efforts of the Grand Alliance, by two subsequent successful revolutions. It would be hard to say what England has gained by these convulsions excepting the growth of a Power on the other side of the Channel which

* It need hardly be said that the alliance of France and England in 1854 against Russia was a war of policy on the part of Napoleon III., intended to dissever the Grand Alliance, which had proved fatal to his uncle, and was anything rather than a measure of support to Great Britain.

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now seriously threatens its independence, and the necessity of maintaining during peace armaments on the scale of the most costly war.

98. Reason of the territorial arrangements of the Congress of Vienna.

Experience, therefore, has now decisively demonstrated the justice of Lord Castlereagh's and Sir Charles Stewart's principle, that every successful revolution on the Continent is a direct addition to the power of revolutionary France, and that it is only by a cordial union between the Conservative states that the dangers with which they are all threatened by its aggression can be obviated. It is often said by the Continental writers that the treaties of Vienna were dictated by hatred to France, and that there was no reasonable ground for this feeling. That, however, was not the real motive which led to that celebrated series of diplomatic acts. Terror—well-founded terror—founded on dear-bought experience, was the ruling principle. Europe had had too much reason to know that France, even as she stood in 1789, was more than a match for any single Power within her bounds, probably than for any two Powers of Continental Europe. When to this natural strength, arising from its great population, compact territory, and the martial spirit of its inhabitants, was added the extraordinary fervour of a revolution, it became irresistible save by a sincere alliance of all the other monarchies. It was for this reason that Lord Castlereagh supported the annexation of Genoa to Piedmont, of Holland to Belgium, of great part of Saxony, of the duchy of Posen, and of the Rhenish Provinces to Prussia, of Lombardy to Austria, and of Norway to Sweden. It was to form efficient barriers against France in Italy and the Low Countries, and against Russia in the Baltic, that all this was done.

99. Additional proof of its justice furnished by subsequent events.

Nationalities indeed are not to be forgotten, and if still more momentous considerations do not intervene, they should ever be respected. But though national feelings are respectable, national independence is still more important; and if the obvious consequence of sacrificing the general safety to the separate attachments of little

states, or the desire to split up great ones for the sake of nationalities, is to subject them all to the *ruthless conquest of a powerful united aggressor*, it is the part of patriotism, not less than wisdom, to accept the lesser evil in order to shun the greater. To withstand an aggression in future, similar to that from which they had just escaped, and which the aspiring and military genius of the French gave them too much reason to apprehend at no distant period, it was indispensable, not merely that the great Powers should be united, but *the lesser Powers so strengthened* as to be of some weight in the political scale, and capable of preventing their territories from becoming, as heretofore, mere battle-fields for the greater Powers to adjust their differences on. If we would appreciate the wisdom of this view, and the necessity on which it was founded, we have only to consider what have been the consequences of these arrangements being overturned. What is the security for the balance of power in Europe when Belgium has been severed from Holland, Lombardy from Austria — when Savoy and Nice have been reannexed to France, and the Emperor Napoleon, at the head of 600,000 men, scarcely disguises his intention of resuming Belgium and the frontier of the Rhine, as part of the territory of the Great Nation, and is making preparations which clearly show his intention of ultimately resuming the maritime crusade of his great predecessor against the independence of Great Britain?*

* In proof that these statements in regard to the danger which this country has incurred by the restoration of the revolutionary regime and the Napoleonic dynasty in France are not overcharged, we subjoin the following extracts from a very able pamphlet recently published in Paris, evidently under the secret auspices of Louis Napoleon, entitled *La Coalition*:—

"Non seulement l'empire a été reconnu partout, mais il a repris en Europe un ascendant considérable, que nous attribuons autant à la vigueur du principe qu'à la haute intelligence de Napoleon III. D'où vient en effet que tous les regards des peuples sont fixés sur nous? Les oppressés nous regardent, et les oppresseurs aussi—les uns parcequ'ils nous aiment, les autres parcequ'ils nous craignent. L'empire à peine a délivré la Turquie que l'Italie du Nord a tendu vers lui ses bras chargés de chaines.

"Il a sauvé l'Italie du Nord. En même temps un violent souffle d'indépendance a passé par toute la Peninsule. On a vu des populations entières sacrifier leur antonomie pour échapper au joug de l'étranger, et se placer

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100. Reasons why revolutionary Powers ever incline to France.

The reason why revolutionary states invariably look to revolutionary France as their head, and in the end, or on any serious crisis, must ever unite their arms with those of that Power against this country, is sufficiently evident, and, being founded in the lasting interests of the two states, may be expected to be of permanent endurance. Essentially industrial and commercial, the interests of Great Britain are inseparably wound up with the preservation of

d'elles-mêmes avec une resolution trois fois exprimée dans des votes solennelles sous l'autorité d'un gouvernement plus national. Où serait l'autorité temporelle des Papes elle-même, si on avait laissé les sujets Romains libres de se prononcer? Le désordre est encore dans les Deux Siciles; Palerme et Messine ont vu couler le sang du peuple. La Venetie proteste, gémit, et implore sa délivrance. Des elans nationaux agitent profondement la Hongrie. Partout une nationalité est en souffrance, un cri de douleur et de vengeance s'éleve. De tous côtés l'histoire contemporaine est pleine de la voix des peuples, des actions des peuples: c'est pour en maintenir que les guerres se font. Le principe des nationalités a vaincu le principe du droit divin, et l'âme des anciennes coalitions s'est envolé. . . .

"Ah! nous sommes loin de Waterloo. Nous ne sommes plus fatigués, epuisés, ruinés par vingt ans de guerres heroïques. Nous avons profités des quarante-cinq ans de paix que la Providence nous a donné pour refaire nos forces, pour retremper notre patriotisme. Nos guerres d'Afrique ont occupé les loisirs de la plus vaillante armée de l'Europe et l'ont disciplinée à la victoire. Nous avons de fort bonnes carabines qui portent loin et juste, et des canons qui peuvent tuer les hommes à trois et quatre kilometres de distance. Notre armée a six cent mille hommes; et si nos frontières étaient menacées il y aurait en France autant de soldats que de Français. *Nous pouvons aussi lutter sur mer.* Nous avons fait construire des vaisseaux gigantiques, blindés de fer, hérissés d'un triple rang de canons; nous avons de solides chaloupes canonnières, enfin une marine puissante et des marins: ce qui nous manquait d'autrefois. . . .

"L'Angleterre ne domine que par sa marine. Il y a en Europe trois ou quatre Puissances maritimes qui si elles savent s'unir peuvent tenir en échec toutes les flottes Anglaises. Que la France s'allie à la Russie, au Danemark, et la Mer du Nord est fermée aux Anglais, et ils sont exclus de la Mer Noire. Qu'elle appelle dans cette alliance l'Espagne, le Portugal, il n'y a plus d'ocean, plus de Mediterranée pour les Anglais. Leur île de Malte, leur Gibraltar, ne seront *plus que des rêves d'ambition, des souvenirs d'une superbe domination détruits.* Que la Russie prend Constantinople, et que par les défilés d'Oural elle se repande en Asie, où elle a déjà atteint les rives du fleuve Amour; que la France s'etablisse à Alexandrie, et qu'elle etend généreusement à travers l'Isthme de Suez, *le chemin des Indes* à toute l'Europe; que l'Autriche, avide de domination, et dont le vieil edifice chancele, se retire lentement de l'Italie, où sa position n'est plus tenable, et qu'elle descende, en suivant le basin du Danube, dans les principautés qui cherchent leur soutien, et sur lesquelles les souverains actuels n'exerçaient qu'une autorité temporaire. *Ce jour là l'Angleterre sera vaincu*, et les forces des nations equilibrées en Europe.

"Il y a donc une coalition à organiser à présent. Elle doit avoir pour but *de renverser de fond en comble ce qui la première coalition a édifié.* Elle se fera, et rien au monde ne peut empêcher qu'elle arrive à ses fins. Il y a tendances

peace, and the maintenance of an undisturbed mercantile intercourse with other nations. Essentially warlike and aggressive, and passionately fond of glory, the interests and passions of France are as inseparably wound up with the prosecution of war, and the advance of their victorious standards into foreign states. The first, from its insular situation, vast colonies, and limited military force at home, is as incapable of lending any effective aid to an infant revolutionary state on the Continent, as the last, from its central position, warlike spirit, and immense army, is of rendering it the most efficacious assistance. Hence, in troubled times, the former becomes discredited, even in the eyes of its insurrectionary allies, by its sympathy in general resulting only in empty words; the latter acquires the moral influence arising from its obvious capability of making good its assurances in weighty deeds. It is not surprising that in such circumstances all revolutionary Powers should look up to France as their head, and make common cause with its fortunes. The *feelings* of England, indeed, are in general in favour of all nations struggling for their liberties; but its material interests derive no support from their efforts, and are entirely dependent on the prosperous slumber of unshaken government. The feelings, equally with the interests of revolutionary France, are alike in favour of external revolution, because in the success of the movement party in other states, they are

irresistibles qui précipitent l'Europe vers une organisation nouvelle: les guerres qui éclatent maintenant proviennent de ce que l'on essaie de résister à ce tendances. Mais il faut remarquer que le triomphe reste partout à la cause des peuples: nous venons d'en voir un exemple éclatant en Italie. Ce qui nous console et ce qui nous rejouit, ce qui nous donne bon espoir, *c'est de voir la France Imperiale prendre l'initiative de ce brave mouvement*, dont les phases et les péripéties fourniront l'histoire de la seconde moitié du neuvième siècle. Ce rôle appartient de droit à la France et à l'empire; à la France, parcequ'elle a soutenu la première seule contre tous le droit du peuple, et qu'elle a succombée glorieusement dans cette lutte en 1814: à l'empire parceque l'empire Français est la seule monarchie actuellement existante qui soit issue de la volonté nationale et qui la représente sincèrement."—*La Coalition*, 13, 32.

Such are the dangers from which the policy of Lord Castlereagh delivered this country, and gave it instead forty years of unbroken peace. Will the new system inaugurated by his successors, of encouraging revolution wherever it breaks out, save at home, give us similar security, or confer upon the world, for a tenth of the time, as great a blessing?

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as sure to find an increase of their friends, as in its defeat they are to experience an augmentation of their enemies. Hence the inclination, equally with the interests of the movement party, both in France and all other Continental states, tends to unite them together, while the combined hostility of both is sure in the end to be directed against this country, whose industrial interests ultimately force it over to the other side. All revolutionary states look to France as their head and main stay, because it has always been the first in the revolutionary movement, and its great military strength qualifies it to form its most efficient protector. All Conservative states in secret rely upon the ultimate support of England, because it is generally known that, however strongly its sympathies in the outset may be enlisted in behalf of the cause of liberty all over the world, its material interests must in the end range it on the side of tranquillity, order, and protected industry, and its wealth forms the resource to which they all must have recourse in a protracted contest. The progress of war, which, in France and its revolutionary allies, is fraught with visions of military glory, general rapine, and the creation of offices of honour and profit for themselves in foreign and subjugated states, in England is prophetic only of increased domestic taxation, dismal commercial stoppages, and a frightful monetary crisis.

101. Inconsistency of the foreign and domestic policy of this country in regard to revolutions.

These considerations at once explain the inconsistency in the policy of this country in foreign affairs, and the domestic administration of its own inhabitants, and the directly opposite sides which its Government has often taken in the affairs of nations during the last eventful eighty years. No people are so much inclined as the English to favour revolutionary movements in foreign states; none so determined to resist them in their own. The leaders of insurrection abroad, or the filibusters who are floating through the world to support them, are, in the general estimation in this country, heroes and demigods on the path to deathless renown; the same characters, when their efforts are directed against the

peace of the British empire, are traitors, who should be hung on the first tree, or pirates, who should be suspended from the first yard-arm. It is hard to say whether Great Britain exerted most energy in combating insurrection, in her own dominions in Ireland, or colonies in America, India, and the Ionian Islands, by force of arms; or in supporting it in those of South American colonies, and in the Spanish Peninsula, by covert intervention, and in Italy, France, and Belgium, by diplomacy and instant recognition of the revolutionary states. Our whole foreign policy for twenty years, under Mr Pitt and Lord Castlereagh, consisted in combating a great alliance of revolutionary states, the offspring of the first Revolution, which ultimately came to put in the utmost peril our national independence, by means of a counter alliance of legitimate empires; our whole foreign policy since its overthrow has consisted in rearing up, against ourselves in the end, a second revolutionary alliance, which at length, under another Napoleon, has come to be even more perilous than the first to our ultimate safety. All this, which to foreign nations seems an inexplicable contradiction, is simply explained by the considerations that our inclinations are strongly in favour of the cause of freedom, but our interests are all dependent upon that of conservatism; and that when the former has been long in the ascendant, a secret and unerring instinct teaches all the holders of property that their interests and the independence of their country are at stake, and that it is time to arm universally for their defence.

102. Light which these views throw on Lord Castlereagh and Sir Chas. Stewart's memory.

These considerations are not foreign to the biography of Lord Castlereagh and Sir Charles Stewart; on the contrary, they constitute the best vindication of their memory. They demonstrate the justice of the principles on which their public career was founded, by showing what have been the consequences of deviating from them. The ruling maxim on which they both acted—viz., that every successful revolution on the Continent is in the

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end a direct addition to the power of France when under a revolutionary government, and a menace the more to the independence of this country—has now been decisively demonstrated by experience to have been well founded. Europe has had too much reason to discover the wisdom of the resolution of the Congress of Vienna, that no peace should be made "with Napoleon Buonaparte *or any of his family.*" The tricolor flag of the Emperor will ever unite all the revolutionary states of the Continent against Great Britain. It is in the alliance of the legitimate Powers that a defence against their aggression can alone be found. Whether such a counterpoise is hereafter to be created, or the days of our freedom and prosperity are numbered, from its having become impossible, as yet lies buried in the womb of time. But this much may with confidence be affirmed, that if these blessings are destined to be lost, it will be from these principles having been forgotten by the nation, and abandoned by its rulers; if preserved, from both having been taught in the school of adversity to recognise their justice, and again act upon their suggestions.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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